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THE POLITICAL TRACTS

OF

M E N E N I U S .

*Eighty-Nine Tracts*

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1848.

Second Edition.

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THE Public has here, in a collected form, the series of Tracts by MENENIUS, written during the eventful crisis of 1848, and which, though each publication bears immediate reference to the occurrences of the moment, contains, as the Publishers have been led to imagine, matter worthy of more permanent preservation than the pamphlet-form affords.

The first of the series—"The Game's up!"—was issued immediately after the conviction of John Mitchel. The second—"A Stitch in Time,"—upon the 29th of July, when disturbances in Dublin were hourly expected. The third—"Menenius to the People"—appeared soon after the affair of Ballin-garry; and the fourth—"Luck and Loyalty"—has been published within the present month.

104, GRAFTON-STREET,

*December, 1848.*





## THE GAME'S UP!

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THE GAME'S UP!—The desperate play of one (let charity hope) demented gambler has been played, on which his all was staked,—and he is ruined.

It is little to me or others that *he* has been the sacrifice to his own madness. Our business is with ourselves. Were we idle lookers-on, without an interest in the matter, we might turn from the table, and only pity the victim. But it was of borrowed money the stakes were principally composed,—his own was but a trifle to make up the sum,—it was *our* happiness that was placed at the hazard of the die.

For *him* the game's up. Thank God we can yet prove our right to the wealth he would have robbed us of to squander, and recover it, to apply it to better uses.

I say his game's up. He told us what his calculations were. They have all hitherto proved fatally erroneous,—even to the devotion of his friends.

My business is not with *him*. God forbid that I should inflict one unnecessary pang upon his family or his admirers. I pass him over. He is gone from

among us,—but he has left millions behind him. *I* am one of them.

I am an Irishman born and bred,—Irish, mind and body,—to the back-bone, and to the heart's core. I have no interests but those of Ireland. I live in Ireland,—I shall probably die in it. Without any boast of patriotism, let the selfishness which is inherent in human nature, and which makes all of us most interested in what most concerns ourselves, be the guarantee for my sincerity. What is England to me, with all my associations, my friends, my family, my income, my home, in Ireland? What is it, beyond the good which I, as an Irishman, derive from it? No more than Russia or China. It is no advantage to me that Great Britain should be prosperous, wise, glorious, good, wealthy, and happy, unless I partake of it. No more than that a Howard or a Fry should go to heaven, while I live and die in my sins. Whatever may be the motives that actuate a British Government, or an English or Scotch member of Parliament, in dealing with Irish affairs, *I* only look upon their acts as they affect me as an Irishman.

I am no theorist, no political economist, no erudite historian, no profound antiquary, no subtle logician, no sweeping cosmopolite. I am a plain man, whose business is with the present, in time and place. I want to be prosperous and happy, and to see those I belong to and live amongst prosperous and happy too. I want, therefore, to speak common



sense, if I can, in a way to be intelligible to those I am interested for.

But this is not the way in which the Irish people have been accustomed to be addressed of late years. Indeed it never was. There is a natural leaning in our minds towards the flowers of rhetoric, which disposes us to listen rather to magnificent declamation than to dry realities; to take vivid illustrations for unanswerable proofs; and to judge of arguments rather by the colouring of imagination in which they may be dressed, than by the form and substance of truth by which they ought to be characterized.

Ireland is fruitful, yet she is poor; she is populous, yet she is idle; she is moral, yet she is criminal; she is intelligent, yet she is uncivilized;—such are the facts under which her counsellors have to advise her. Such is the case, to use the lawyer's phrase, "briefed out" to her advocates.

I am willing to assume that these advocates are disinterested. It makes no difference to me whether they are so or not. The facts remain the same in either case.

Again, it makes no difference to me what has happened in past ages. I am born into the world as it is now; I take it as I find it. My business is with existing people and things. Accordingly, I have nothing to say to the old misgovernment of Ireland, either by itself or by England, any more than I have to do with the sin of Adam. Neither is it anything to me if the Union were carried by unrighteous or

unconstitutional means. That was our fathers' business. If they did not prevent it, we cannot help it. We find Ireland afflicted with evils which may have arisen, in whole or in part, from English domination; and in a condition which may or may not have been induced by the Act of Union; but, however these things may be, we belong to to-day. We exist nominally as a nation, but in point of fact as an integral part of the British Empire; incorporated into its very essence; governed by the same Sovereign; represented, as its original component parts were, in the great Council of the Empire; and identified in every possible respect with its being and existence. Whatever our opinions may be on questions connected with these facts, the facts remain: we ARE a part of the British Empire, just as a branch, however originally produced, becomes, by process of grafting, a part of the tree, having support from the same stem, and deriving vitality from the same sap.

No one attempts to deny this; but what we *have been*, on the one hand, what we *ought to be*, or *might have been*, on the other, are the only questions with politicians of the class of him whose "game's up."

The fact I have mentioned, of complete incorporation with England, obvious as it is, simplifies many questions which have puzzled wise heads. Let us begin with Roman Catholic Emancipation. Until the Union there could be no question that the "ascendancy" of Protestantism in Ireland was an anomalous condition of things. It pointed to a despotic



system, under which the governing power, though possibly for ends beneficial to all parties, imposed restrictions upon one *kingdom* within the empire. But, subsequently to the Union, it was the habit of many able and well-meaning Irishmen to view the condition of the Roman Catholics in Ireland before 1829, as equally anomalous, because they considered this country as still a *kingdom*, and as such, delivered to the government of the minority. The "Catholic Question," since 1800, ought not to have been thus looked upon. It was an imperial question, and would have been equally so had every man in Ireland been a Roman Catholic. If twenty-six millions were the population of the empire, then of these eighteen or nineteen millions were Protestants. The question was one of expediency, not of constitutional right. Was it for the benefit of the whole that the excluded minority should be politically adopted into the State, or not? It was of no consequence that the majority of that minority happened to inhabit Ireland, or that in that country the minority constituted the local majority. All that the British-Irish Statesman had to look to was, whether certain privileges could be extended with safety and advantage to a hitherto disabled class.

And here I cannot but lament that a better name was not given at the time of the Union to the consolidated kingdoms than that awkward one of "the Great Britains," which is found only, as far as I am aware, on the coins of the realm. It is practically

unknown ; and “ England ” and “ Great Britain ” exclude us altogether. “ The United Kingdom ” is not a name but a designation ; and there is much in a name, if not positively by furnishing an argument, at least negatively, by taking it out of men’s mouths. *Ireland* is the cry on one side. How weak a response would “ the Great Britains ” or “ the United Kingdom ” be on the other !

Well, Emancipation was granted. Under what circumstances, and by whom, it is not necessary to inquire. Roman Catholics are now partakers of all the political privileges of the State. This was to have been a final measure. As far back as the year 1757 the “ finality ” of Emancipation was insisted on by the Roman Catholic bishops, clergy, and laity, as its essential attribute and recommendation. In 1792 this declaration was confirmed by an oath. In 1805, in 1808, in 1812, and in 1826, each petition renewed the pledge in plain and emphatic language. The pastoral address of the Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops of Ireland enforced the declaration upon their clergy. The English Roman Catholic bishops subscribed a declaration to the same effect, in the same year.

But it was easy to see that it would *not* be a final measure ; in fact, it could not be so. There is no such thing as “ finality ” in politics. Progress is the law of legislation, because it deals with changing circumstances, and is the act of men liable to be influenced by such circumstances.

From 1829 to 1844 there was a great development of opinion. There can be no doubt that the vast genius and extraordinary perseverance of one man did much to stamp upon the masses the impress of his own thoughts ; but, be that as it may, what concerns us now is that certain opinions did become prevalent in Ireland, and that certain acts sprung from these opinions. Things at last wore a dangerous aspect, and strong measures were adopted. And this brings us nearer to our own time.

Let us look at 1844. A few of the leaders of popular opinion were brought within the grasp of the law, and punished. The effect was immediate and magical. A lull ensued ; public confidence was restored, and the stage cleared for the trial of social experiments. Unfortunately, one or two untoward circumstances occurred, to weaken the moral effect of what had been done. One of these was the reversal, on technical grounds, of the judgment of the law on the offenders. Another, and a much more injurious one, was a gratuitous declaration of weakness on the part of the Government. But still the phenomenon was not the less striking. Ireland was placed, for the first time, in a position to put to the test the soundness of the imperial views respecting her. Every good man ought to have been anxious to see the question fairly tried ; for no one pretending to principle could hold that the happiness of a people were better purchased by blood than achieved by the peaceful process of economic amelioration.



Bright, indeed, were our prospects in that year. Following close upon the heels of tranquillity were the visible development of our industrial resources, the silent flow of capital into the country, the advance of every trade, of every science, of every art, that can enrich, ennoble, and beautify life ;—and, as a consequence, the business of agitation was all but bankrupt. Rancour, animosity, were dormant in the public mind, or betook themselves to their lairs in the breasts of disappointed “ patriots.” Oh ! had that period been one in which the commercial credit of England stood on a firm basis ; and oh ! had it seemed good to the Almighty disposer of events to withhold His chastening hand from the first fair effort of a tranquillized community, what might not have been the result, even now ? But to Him it seemed good to deny both of these blessings ; doubtless for the best, though inscrutable, purposes. I am now only stating facts ; and, in point of fact, England—the world—*was*, at the period in question, on the brink of great calamities ;—one social, in a monetary crisis, unexampled in recent times ; the other natural, in the failure, all over the world, of an article of food, which, in Ireland, formed the subsistence of the great bulk of the population.

Either of these calamities must have affected the experiment materially. The occurrence of both together rendered it altogether fruitless. Bankruptcy had begun to paralyze the energies of England just at the moment that famine commenced its fatal work

upon the millions in Ireland. This was an unexpected opportunity for the crest-fallen school of agitation. Organized as the system had long been by the exertions of one man, who in his declining years vainly sought, or seemed to seek, to restrain it to purposes consistent with the maintenance of order,—it needed little additional effort to revive it in its strength, now that physical destitution stared the masses it controlled in the face. The old machinery was repaired, furbished up, and set to work in good earnest; for it could not be unmade, and was always at hand to be applied as those who commanded it might direct. It needed less of effort to revive the system, because now there was a real, substantial, tremendous evil present. No oratory was necessary to show men that they were starving. This was a great FACT. Now, then, was the time to *make use of it*.

I have no wish to enter at large into the history of the new school of agitation. It would do no good, and it is well known. The Empire (an awkward word) was, in her extremity, called upon to support the starving millions of Ireland. So she ought, if she could,—for Ireland was part of herself. It was natural to expect that, in a united council, those most immediately interested in the part visited with calamity should seek for the greatest possible share of relief, and that those less so should be anxious to reduce it to the least possible effectual amount. This is human nature, and cannot be complained of. It is

the case of every deliberative assembly. The actual sum afforded will be the medium between the claims on the one hand, and the concessions on the other. But it must not be forgotten that the financial resources of the Empire happened to be, at that moment, crippled beyond precedent,—a circumstance which must also naturally have controlled the general estimate ; so that, viewing the embarrassments of all parties, there was nothing surprising if the means actually placed at the disposal of the country needing relief proved inadequate to the purpose. Neither was it very surprising that the Legislature, in its hurry and perplexity, should have chosen a mode of relief in some measure unsatisfactory and uneconomic. Assuredly it is not to be charged against it, that it should have acted thus unwisely from any motive but a mistaken one. For it would be clearly against its interests to have expended money in any other way than that most advantageous to all parties ; and, as I have already said, self-interest is the great actuating influence with all of us.

A good deal, however, was done. The number of rations issued daily, free of cost, in 1847, was, in May, 777,884 ; June, 1,923,261 ; July, 2,342,000. The average number of persons daily employed in relief works of drainage and of roads was, in October, 1846, 114,000 ; November, 285,000 ; December, 440,000 ; in January 1847, 570,000 ; in February, 700,000 ; and in March, 734,000. The amount voted by the Imperial Parliament for Ireland



during the famine, in various shapes, was, in round numbers, £10,350,000. No trifling sum, to say nothing of the unexampled profusion of private charity. But all this was not enough to prevent thousands from dying of hunger and destitution ; thousands more from sinking from competence and independence to pauperism and the poor-house. It, no doubt, was not enough to accomplish this ; but, as I have said, it did a good deal, and in the right direction. Believe me, it is no easy matter to feed a foodless nation. The extraneous nature of the supply renders its operation less efficacious than it might be. It is unnatural and unprecedented, and, therefore, not easily managed. To conduct the public money as food to remote districts, is a difficult, complicated, and expensive process. Nature has intended that food, or what is bartered for food, should be grown or fabricated on the spot where it is to be consumed, and by those who have an interest in its being done profitably. Hence, in the artificial substitution, instances must necessarily have been numerous of unequal distribution,—of districts penetrated into slowly, or inadequately,—and, as a consequence, of appalling local destitution, of fearful individual suffering ; and all this, even had the supply, as originally voted, been equal to the demand.

Now I come to the use the new agitators made of all this. They had their *facts* at hand. Starvation inadequately relieved ; cases of death innumerable, before or without relief. England, a country prover-

bial for its wealth (which is always magnified in the eyes of the ignorant), appearing in the attitude of a niggardly alms-giver. An early history, which presented an inferior nation by the side of a superior ; and, of course, the usual amount of injustice exercised towards the one by the other.

With these facts they had to deal as best suited their own objects. They had only to tell the people that it was England that starved them ; that she was rich enough to feed them ; that it was common justice that she should feed them ; and that history showed that she never had, and therefore never could have, the wish to feed them ; they had only to say this to be believed,—for the great paradox of starvation renders anything credible.

They did tell them all this : and *there* is their guilt. Men should be particularly cautious how they mystify people who are suffering. It is no excuse, scarcely an extenuation, that they might have had what they considered the ultimate good of the sufferers in view when they did so. They took advantage of their extremity to influence their understandings, and tampered with a judgment helplessly confided to them during the deadly struggle with famine.

Herein lies the sophistry of the anti-English party now. They lay natural evils to political causes ; they assume that, if social evils are not immediately got rid of by legislation, the constitution under which they exist must be bad ; and they lay all evils, social, moral, political, and natural, at the door of England.

Herein lies their guilt ; that, building on these sophisms, they hurry matters forward in the present alarm and excitement of the country, and urge the people to act decisively, and in steps not hereafter to be retraced.

Well, I have now arrived at the present year. Things looked ominous enough in Ireland at its commencement. The licentiousness of the public Press was unexampled. The public mind was disturbed and excited: it resembled the uneasiness of the brute creation before an earthquake. Suddenly, France broke up with a crash ; and the other kingdoms of Europe were split in all directions to their centres. This was an unexpected piece of good fortune ; and, as people are apt to let out secrets in moments of triumph, it was now plainly intimated by the leaders of public opinion in Ireland, that “ Repeal ” had all along meant “ separation,”—that a “ local parliament ” meant a “ republic,”—and that “ reform ” meant “ revolution.” This was a great key to the past,—it is likewise a great guide for the future.

Incendiary harangues and writings now breathed an immediate appeal to force,—*not* to obtain the Repeal of the Union, be it remembered, but *because it had not been already obtained*. It was to be a war of *retribution*, and, therefore, of *extermination*.

Simultaneous with this appeal was a further development of the views—or tactics—of the party. I must call it *the party*, because I hold that, for the present, and *practically*, “ Old ” and “ Young ” Ireland



are synonymous terms,—synonymous, as far as imperial interests are concerned, though distinguished from each other as to the means by which these interests are to be overthrown, and the use that is to be made of the victory. It was no longer the Roman Catholic and Protestant party *in Ireland*; it was the British and the Irish party; that is, the party which was to make the election of Great Britain as its country, and that which was to choose Ireland as such; and every one was dubbed a “Saxon” who preferred to support British connexion. This was a well-devised modification of previous distinctions. Any one can see what it meant, and how it was calculated to serve the objects of its inventors.

As a proof that the movement party was in earnest, it inculcated and adopted military preparations. The people were exhorted to arm; and their leaders provided themselves and others with such weapons as they could procure. Instructions were given through their journals in the art of defence and attack; and drilling was recommended and put in practice. Whilst the leading journal of the movement endeavoured to blind the Government by boasting that all its proceedings would take place in the face of day, the conspirators were making their effective arrangements in the strictest privacy; and it was only through the faithlessness of some of themselves that the executive was made aware of the amount and imminence of the danger, and of the real tactics intended to be pursued.

Prompt measures were taken to avert—or meet—the impending struggle. The metropolis was placed in a state of defence, and the military strength of the provinces was reinforced. The effect has hitherto been to overawe the conspirators and their party. The Lord Lieutenant had a difficult part to act. He was placed, with the charge of the peace of the country upon him, in the midst of parties who stood in complex and varying relations of hostility or amity to the Government he belonged to. Certain classes and certain creeds were to be looked upon with a favourable eye; certain others were not to be recognised as classes or creeds at all. In addition to this, the Corporation of Dublin, on whom the preservation of the peace of the city ought perhaps, in the first instance, constitutionally to have devolved, had manifested too vacillating a spirit to be safely intrusted with it. Hence, in a difficulty which he felt to be insurmountable, the Lord Lieutenant took his own course,—the course which the conviction of every man who *really* wished to see order preserved felt to be the true one,—he placed the defence of the city in the hands of the military authorities, and even went so far as to reject the assistance of those who proposed to co-operate with them.

Every one knew what this meant. There was no rank or class of persons in Dublin who could, as such, be depended on. But there was a *creed* which could; and this was a fact which, though Lord Clarendon and every one in the community, disaffected

or otherwise, felt to be indisputable, *he* could not breathe in any one of the numerous answers he returned to the addresses presented to him during the crisis. He could not do so, because at the same moment the Government with whom he acted were adopting the policy of assuming, with a view to ulterior objects, the loyalty of that very denomination of persons who had been here tacitly and practically stigmatized with disaffection.

Whether this was the necessary effect of the position of the country, and of Ministers, and of Europe, it is not my business to inquire. I only state facts; and every one knows that such *was* in fact the arrangement of the chess-board at the juncture in question.

This firm policy of Lord Clarendon of course produced dissatisfaction in proportion to its wisdom. It was too bad that, when every little petty state in Europe had its revolution, Ireland should not be allowed to try one of its own. France seemed to present some hopes of assistance, and accordingly she was sounded, but without effect. Nothing was to be gained in that quarter. Efforts were made to provoke Lord Clarendon to strike the first blow, but with equal success. His Excellency knew that, even if the menacing attitude of things might, in other times, have justified an aggressive movement, it never would do at this period of European excitement to give a handle to other nations to layhold of, as if an act of tyranny had been committed. But, seeing that



the outrageous license of the platform and the press was urging the ignorant and suffering multitude beyond the control of reason, the Government, with his consent, determined on recommending the extension of a British law to Ireland, deepening the character of the offence in the latter country, and applying a mitigated penalty in both. The change was accordingly effected ; and the ringleader of the disaffected party, fortunately, was the first to render himself amenable to the new law.

I have no intention, as I said before, to deal with that person's case, as it concerns himself ;—by and by I will say a word about one or two circumstances connected with it, as they concern others.

Lord Clarendon's strong position dissatisfied the party. In Dublin they laboured, with inconsistent insidiousness, on the one hand to tamper with the fidelity of the soldiery and police, on the other to hold up the one and the other force to the execration of the populace, as thirsting for the massacre of their fellow-subjects. They even affected to feel terror at the aspect of such an armed force in the city—an amusing piece of grimace, since they perfectly well knew that it rested with themselves to keep that force, were it ten times as great, perfectly innoxious, and that, like law itself, it could only be a terror to evil-doers. The corporation went the length of assuming a similar attitude of terror in presence of the Lord Lieutenant ; these sober citizens knowing full well that, *irrespective of ulterior objects*,

their plain interest was to keep themselves, their lives and properties, under the protection of Her Majesty's troops, who are, as British soldiers, *their own countrymen*, and are at least as well content to march out to reviews in the Park, and lounge about our streets, as to have to face the ten-foot pikes lying in bundles in the different secret depots through the city, ready to rip them up.

Assuming these and such other expostulators as not to belong to THE PARTY, their conduct seems utterly inexplicable. Men of property, with everything to lose, and no means of self-defence, while the city swarmed with excited thousands armed with rifles and pikes, to desire to see Her Majesty's troops marching out of Dublin, Her Majesty's ships sailing from the harbour ! Troops, which had never done harm but to the common enemies of our country ; ships, which had never fired a shot, except in defence of the liberties and possessions of the very men who now wished to have it believed that they were trembling in their vicinity ! No effrontery—and some tolerably strong corporate instances of that quality are on record—could exceed that of a body of wealthy citizens of the second city in Her Majesty's dominions going up to her representative, and gravely telling him that the presence of her forces by sea and land filled them with alarm—for their lives and properties !

But Lord Clarendon, like Gallio, “cared for none of these things.” Fortunately for the good and the true

men of Ireland and of Great Britain, he pursued the safe and calm course he had from the first struck out for himself. Perfect passiveness on the one hand, so that trade and credit should be as little as possible disturbed ; perfect readiness, on the other, to meet any onset which the enemies of order might be tempted to make. In other words, *a strong defensive position* ; for exactly in proportion as you strengthen your post, do you lessen the chances of its being attacked. Thus Lord Clarendon's policy was designed, and has proved hitherto, a *peaceful* policy ; and it is the enemies of peace, or they whom they delude, who alone quarrel with it. In thus vindicating the policy of the Viceroy I must not be understood to be his champion. "The Castle" has no charms for me. I am a citizen and an Irishman ; and approve only of what benefits me and my country. Far less do I want to fight the battles of Government. They have committed too many mistakes to put me under much obligation to them ;—but the question is not between this and that government. It is between the government we have, and anarchy, —that is, between inconvenience and disaster,—between embarrassment and ruin.

Looking coolly at the state of things in this country, it may fairly be concluded that, as regards the immediate hopes of the disaffected party, "the game's up." Lord Clarendon was openly defied by an individual who was willing to test his prowess in his own person. The gage has been accepted ; the



tilt has been run ; the challenging party has been arrested, convicted, sentenced, and transported ; and yet things remain as they were ; the entrenched force at its post, the attacking one still hesitating before it.

Is this attitude to continue for ever ?

Before I answer that question I will, as I promised, say a word about the "jury packing" system, as it is called ; since, it seems, it is in this particular that the late trial has lost its "moral effect." I must speak plainly. I am no lawyer. I may make technical blunders ; but it will not do to wrangle about words and forms. When life and liberty are concerned, still more, when the tranquillity and happiness of a whole country are involved, it is the spirit and not the letter the honest man will look to.

Trial by jury was originally a trial by twelve neighbours. But it was controlled, modified, and altered from time to time by Statute, as expediency pointed out ; and now, in a case such as that I am considering, includes two findings : one by a grand jury of twenty-three, on an *ex parte* indictment ; the other by a jury of twelve, in view of the whole case. These latter jurors are called from the panel prepared by the sheriff, and must be good men and true, "above all suspicion."

Now, that men should be "above all suspicion," within the meaning of the law, it is clearly necessary that there should be some standard, some criterion, by which to ascertain the fitness or unfitness of the party to be placed on the panel ; for which reason a discre-

tion is left to the sheriff. The very existence of a qualification shows that some line must be drawn. What is the juror called upon to do? First, to take an oath. Well, he must, therefore, be a person who is supposed to consider himself bound by an oath in a court of justice. He ought to be one professing a religion which holds the obligation of an oath, voluntarily incurred, as paramount to every consideration; and its violation, under any circumstances, perjury. He must be one, moreover, who is supposed to consider himself, the prisoner, and all his fellow-subjects, amenable to the laws according to which the trial is to go forward, and to hold himself bound to do his part, in the strict meaning of the oath he has taken, "well and truly to try" the case before him, dismissing preconceived notions altogether from his mind. He must be one, finally, who has no known sympathy or partiality for the prisoner, or those associated with him in the acts which form the ground of the indictment. From all these objections the juror must be free, before he can be called "a good and true man, above all suspicion."

Now, how is a sheriff to act in this country at the present juncture? Principles of disaffection to the British government are notoriously spread far and wide:—principles which strike at the root of British law, as not being binding on Irishmen; and at the foundation of plain morality, as admitting excepted cases, in which some ulterior good may justify the immediate dereliction of a voluntarily undertaken obliga-

tion. He finds a pre-existing bias, not only regarding the prisoner in charge, and the party to which he belongs, but affecting the very tribunal before which the case is brought, and the Constitution under which that tribunal exists. He sees, moreover, that, whether it be universally held or not, the doctrine at all events is very extensively acted on by persons professing the religion of the majority in this country, that what might, abstractedly taken, be considered a crime, may, under peculiar aspects, and with reference to correlative circumstances, become either innocent or even praiseworthy. The code of morality he observes to be not a positive, an unchangeable one, but to be modified by various influences. In point of fact he has witnessed the common spectacle of jurors professing that religion, and in other respects of unimpeachable integrity, entering the box with the avowed determination of returning a verdict, not according to the evidence which they swear to have regard to, but in conformity with what they consider a higher duty, the interest of the prisoner, or the "welfare" of their country. With this predetermination they do not hesitate to take the oath, which in its plain and ordinary meaning prohibits any forejudging of the case, or the consideration of anything except "the evidence" to be laid before them. They have determined to disregard that oath, not because they would willingly incur the guilt or disgrace of perjury, but because they hold other considerations paramount to that obligation, and enter



upon it with a secret proviso in favour of their, it may be, conscientious views.

The sheriff knows all this. He has two courses to pursue, either to return a panel indiscriminately, or to exercise a discretion.

In Mitchel's case the circumstances were peculiarly strong. The country was extremely disaffected. This disaffection spread through all classes, and extended to a virtual repudiation of British Government, law, and authority, in Ireland. The whole Constitution was rejected, and, of course, the particular contrivances devised under that Constitution for the purpose of administering justice, lost their efficacy with the rejection of the Constitution itself. It only depended on the amount of religious obligation that might happen to attach to an oath in the breast of a disaffected individual, how far it might bind him. There was no moral or social obligation in it. And as to the religious obligation, it is pretty clear that in the particular creed in question it too often floats and fluctuates with the current of circumstances.

A "Mitchelite," I do not hesitate to say, was, and is, according to the spirit of the British Constitution, manifestly inadmissible on a jury in a political case. Look at Mitchel's own maxims. Britons (that is, the friends of English connexion in Ireland) are usurpers and aliens; British law is a hideous juggle; British judges are sanguinary ogres; British governors are butchers. Mitchel's avowed intention originally was to refuse to acknowledge the jurisdiction

of Her Majesty's Courts, or to attempt any defence; though every one has seen how signally he failed to act in accordance with that voluntary announcement. Could any one who subscribed to such principles be properly placed upon the panel in this or any other case of the kind? If he were, would an Attorney-General be doing his duty if he did not peremptorily challenge him?

A Roman Catholic,—I speak it with regret,—is likewise, as such, unsafe as a juryman in political cases in times like these. I do not mean to assert,—God forbid that I should,—that the objection holds against every individual professing that religion. On the contrary, I believe that a vast majority of the more enlightened portion of Roman Catholics would repudiate with abhorrence the idea of taking an oath with a reservation. No; the disqualification lies here; that an oath is not *necessarily* binding; that the violation of an oath is not necessarily and irredeemably perjury. The possibility of an excepted case, and of absolution, creates an uncertainty which leads a sheriff, who has to make up his panel of men “above suspicion,” to avoid Roman Catholics where he can; and, in like manner, leads the Crown, in a case like the present, to prefer the *certainty* of religious and moral amenableness in the Protestant to the *chance* of its existence in the Roman Catholic.

And who were those who were retained upon the jury? Was there an attempt made by any one to charge them with more than this, that they were *not* Mitchelites, *not* Roman Catholics? These ne-

gative crimes formed the sum of their guilt. Not being Mitchelites, not being Roman Catholics, they acknowledged the authority of the Court, took the oath in its obvious meaning, and applied themselves to the case before them as if it were a calculation in their counting-houses, or a coroner's inquest. They were retained because they acknowledged the authority of British law in this country, and suffered themselves to be unreservedly bound by the oath it presented to them. That which the rejected might have submitted to only as the yoke that was to admit them close enough to the vehicle to kick at the parties inside, was, by the retained, submissively adopted as harness by which the car of justice was to be moved forward. Has any one attempted to insinuate that the jury in this case would not have given the prisoner the benefit of any reasonable doubt or difficulty that might have arisen ; or that they would have agreed upon their verdict upon any less irrefragable grounds than perfect proof? No one has dreamt of such a thing. The case was so plain that no defence was set up. The prisoner's counsel justified, instead of extenuating or disproving the offence,—if indeed he did not seek to disprove the felony by establishing a case of high treason. How did he justify the offence? By repeating the *dictum* of an Irish House of Commons, that “none but the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland could make laws to bind the Irish people,” as applicable to the present order of things. In other words, by insinuating



that the existing laws were not binding on himself, his client, the jury, or any one else ; and, consequently, that the Courts which administered those laws were not legal tribunals. It was as if the fact came in question, whether the Sessions-house where the trial took place, stood in a particular spot or not ; and when twelve plain men were empanelled to try it, counsel should seek to influence their verdict, by pointing to the daily and yearly motion of the earth, and the progress of the solar system. In Mitchel's case, taking the law and constitution as fixed points, you could not but convict him. Question the stability of these, which Mr. Holmes did, and a jury might have been dispensed with altogether. But a juror who would be willing to be deceived by such an argument, was clearly not fit for his duty ; and hence those persons, not "above suspicion" on this score, were removed at once.

The panel was fairly chosen, and the jury was fairly constituted, considering the question morally. It becomes a grave question whether, in this country, a *form* should be retained at all, calculated to give a handle to the enemies of justice to impeach the integrity of those who administer it. Trial by jury, in criminal cases, such as it now exists, is not suited to Ireland. The moral and political evil is too widely spread to admit of the question of guilt or innocence being safely left to any twelve men taken at random, especially when the timidity, corruption, or tenets of one of them can render fruitless the integrity of the

remaining eleven. Jurors in the provinces are considered rather as champions entering the lists to defend a cause, than investigators of truth. The obligation of the oath is scarcely thought of: the point is, will this man or that stick by his friends? Will he be staunch to "his country?" For the commonest and plainest case of assault, or murder, is almost uniformly made a sort of political "faction-fight," in which the question of morality is quite lost sight of in the party struggle. And now, when the disease has spread and become more malignant, can a jury of unprejudiced men be procured *at hazard* in any class of the community? Is it not to be anticipated that out of every dozen men you see, one at least may be found impenetrable to the arguments of British law, and vowed to what he calls "the cause of Ireland,"—that is, to refuse a verdict in a British Court of justice against any criminal for any public offence? Does not the very atrocity of the threats launched against those jurors who lately did their duty in the face of popular clamour, prove that the jury-box is considered a political ordeal rather than a piece of legal machinery? No imputation of a verdict found against the evidence was thrown out. No: it is simply that a verdict was given against the *man*, as representing a party. It was a verdict in favour of British—that is, Imperial or Anglo-Irish—law, and against the subversion of all existing law and authority.

I do not like to propose remedies, any more than I do to give advice, for I have no authority to back me. But if any remedial attempt could safely be made in

so important a matter as trial by jury, I think that a stronger and more explicit test might be proposed to the jury, which should give, first, to the parties concerned a preliminary power of sifting the principles of the men to be placed upon it; and secondly, to the public a recorded exposition of the general principles of the juror, to judge of his verdict by. This should be accomplished by means of an oath, which every man should be obliged to take in open court when called to serve on a jury, in addition to that now tendered to him. This oath should be framed so as to include allegiance; acknowledgment of the laws of the United Kingdom as binding on liege subjects,—in particular, admission of the legal jurisdiction of courts of justice; a solemn admission of the obligation of an oath, in its true and obvious meaning; and an abnegation of the doctrine that any earthly authority can prospectively or retrospectively release from such obligation, or absolve from the sin committed in violating it.

Oaths of abjuration, it may be said, can have little effect, because the authority you seek to make a man abnegate upon oath, has power to absolve from the obligation of that oath.

There was some wisdom in our fathers, however. They knew that the explicitness of an oath proclaimed the perjury of him who violated it. And many natures which would creep out of an obligation through a loop-hole, would shrink from bursting through it in the face of the world.

But the wisdom of modern policy has been to



knock off oath after oath, as if they were links of a chain, instead of tests of freedom. He that fears oaths such as these, confesses himself a slave.

All that the oath I propose would insure is *impartiality*—a qualification on the part of a juror which is tacitly assumed by the British Constitution to exist in every case, and a want of which would be sufficient, in the eye of the Constitution, to render any juror ineligible.

If, in addition to this, the great principle of the Scottish law were adopted in Ireland, and a certain majority of the jury empowered to return a verdict, much would have been done to restore confidence in legal tribunals, and restrain the machinations of those persons who trade upon the defective jury system on the one hand, and the expedients by which its defects are sought to be avoided on the other.

Trial by jury, strictly analogous to the British, cannot exist much longer in this country. You cannot try the disaffected by a jury of the disaffected; just as you cannot guide a balloon in the air, because you have nothing but air to work upon. There must be a “purchase,” as the mechanic would call it, to bring any force into play. The argument will, I know, be met, as it has been met, by telling me that if *all* are disaffected there must be good reason for it, and a radical change has become necessary: but, in the first place, the evil would be nearly as great in practice though the disaffected should be but one-twelfth of the whole community; for so slight an infu-

sion of these principles through the classes eligible as jurors would be sufficient to paralyze the arm of justice in all its motions, as long, at least, as unanimity is essential to a verdict. And again, even if the great majority of British subjects inhabiting this island were indisposed towards British Government and laws, still, as I have already remarked in speaking of the question of Roman Catholic Emancipation after the Union, the local majority here is the actual minority of the Empire, just as a majority of Irish members might be, and are, a minority of the house; and the general welfare of the empire might demand that the disaffection of that local majority should be disregarded as necessitating a general change of measures; its collective wisdom controlling the more partial judgment—or delusion—of the disaffected portion. Indeed, it is in the nature of things that no one subordinate portion of a complex body politic could be expected to be perfectly contented with its condition, if, from any circumstances whatever, it should find itself in a less prosperous state than other portions. Because it would, if left to itself, of course, seek to gain an equality with the circumjacent portions, by reducing them until the general level was uniform,—that is, *at their expense*; and any arguments or efforts of their's to resist this, even though they should appeal to the general advantage of the whole community, would be set down to selfish motives, and denounced accordingly.

It is precisely thus with Ireland. It would, like

a drowning man, seek to save itself, by pulling its preserver under water. Great Britain, with humane caution, seems to avoid the fatal grasp, in order that she may the more effectually render assistance, the success of which involves *the safety of both*. Ireland is less rich, less prosperous, less contented than Great Britain. But she is part of the empire. The empire cannot be expected to make her more rich, prosperous, or contented than it finds her. All that it can do is to place her in a condition to become so ; to give her every advantage consistent with her subordinate position, so that the part shall not be greater than the whole ; to speed intercommunication of thought, things, and persons, so as to diminish the irregularities complained of ;—to assign limits to her pretensions on the one hand, and to respond cordially to her claims on the other.

And this brings me to the *future*. Are the attitudes of menace by Ireland and defence by the empire to continue for ever ?

Look what it is that Government and its supporters wish to maintain. They do not deny that Ireland is distressed, disorganized, and unhappy. But they deny that existing England is the cause of this. They say that the question is with the present and the future, not with the past. They assert that they are, in point of fact, the peace-makers and peace-preservers. Peace has been preserved hitherto, and peace it is their object to preserve. They argue that the aggression is with the other side. If a position



of strength is taken up, it is to repel attack, not to cover hostilities. If the law has been had recourse to, it was, in the provinces, to check outrage, in the capital, to discourage rebellion.

Charged with ruling by a strong hand, they state that they do so, not merely for the sake of preserving the public peace, but for the far more important purpose of permanently benefiting the country and its inhabitants. Though war is in itself so great an evil, that burdens must be oppressive indeed before the contingent results of a recourse to arms can counterbalance the miseries that alternative inevitably brings along with it, yet even if a revolution could be accomplished bloodlessly, and with safety to public credit and public morality, they argue that the change must be for the worse,—for, notwithstanding the language of the disaffected leaders, there *is* a superlative even to our comparative wretchedness. They do not deny the existence of wretchedness, but they recognise its causes: some of them in the irrevocable past; some of them arising from long-continued agitation; some of them providential; but none of them to be necessarily removed by a sweeping political change. They state furthermore, that they occupy an entrenched position now against the feelings of the physical majority of the country, for the twofold object of preserving the predominancy of property and intelligence over brute force, and of maintaining the true interests of the masses against an acute excitement and fever, just as in actual fever

the strong man is curbed of his will, in order that he may be able to exercise his rational will on his restoration to health. For they hold that there *is* such a thing as political fever, with its progress, delirium, crisis, and decline : that that fever is infectious, and is now aggravated here by infection from abroad : that it is dangerous, but that it is curable ; and that the cure must be brought about, or at least assisted, by the skilful application of remedies, not administered in obedience to the diseased demands of the patient, but in conformity to the rules of science, and according to the dictates of humanity.

They allege, moreover, that in a country such as our's, but lately brought forward in the scale of civilization, and still short of the high standard of some other nations, the opinions of the masses are in a great measure moulded on those of a few persons, who, adopting some popular watchword, assume to be their leaders, and, having first instilled certain notions into their minds, of which they had never dreamt before, afterwards represent themselves as their mouth-piece, and put forth the very ideas which originated with themselves, as if they derived their importance from the numerical weight of the masses who have adopted them. They argue, that these principles are to be weighed, first, on their own merits, and, secondly, as they may derive force from the character and capabilities of those who have originally propounded them ; but are by no means to be considered sound, *because* they have been adopted :—and

in this latter respect, regard is to be had to the ripeness of the people to listen to any doctrine which holds out golden hopes,—to their real sufferings, and consequent discontent,—to their excitability of temperament,—to their imperfect education,—and to other causes which, partly justly, partly unjustly, dispose them to quarrel with those to whom they are socially subordinated.

This much they state, in justification of their present attitude.

What is the case of the attacking party ?

First, they go back to the past. No prescription runs against their arguments. “The song begins from Jove.” “Ireland was conquered, planted, and governed by England.” Well, so it was. “Ireland had a Parliament.” I deny it. Ireland NEVER had a Parliament; no, not even in 1782; no, not even in 1792. It is one of the monster delusions of the day to dream that Ireland ever had a Parliament, in the sense in which the party now uses the word. It possessed a council, selected exclusively from an ascendant minority, and on which England conferred greater or less powers of legislation from time to time. The very circumstance of England having previous to its extinction enlarged those powers, is evidence of its having the power of diminishing or annihilating them; and this is not a Parliament. I, for my part, look upon the whole “carriage of the Union” as a solemn mockery, got up to conceal the fact, which was, that the British Parliament willed the extinction of the



local legislature, and preferred having its own consent to openly exercising the power it possessed. The pompous declaration of this Irish Council, that “none but the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland, had power to make laws for Ireland,” was of as much significance as the “for ever” so frequently adopted in solemn Acts of legislation, and as frequently violated. The Irish “Parliament” was a council, introduced by the English into a conquered country, for certain limited purposes, and extinguishable at pleasure. Of what avail was the declaration of independence of the Irish Parliament by the British, if it was independent already? And, if it was not, was not the independence resumable, notwithstanding the formal “for ever”?

NO—a PARLIAMENT—a self-existing, paramount, constitutional council of the nation, *never* existed in Ireland;—or, if it did, it was the *magnum concilium* we have heard of lately. If it did, it never could have had its powers limited or enlarged by another council, once they were settled; it never could have annihilated itself, or been annihilated, except by the conquest of the nation. We were, up to 1800, a colony, not a kingdom; and as such our true “Constitution” lay within the Constitution of the parent State. The fatal mistake was allowing the country to be mistaken in its true position. This was policy, but it is an exploded and a past policy; and we are now, since the Union, for the first time, a free portion of a free empire.

“Ireland prospered under her Parliament” (so called). So it did, to a certain extent, for its agricul-

tural produce, imperfectly developed as such resources were, obtained the advantage of a high market in war time,—and the industry of the North was as conspicuous as it is now. Dublin was a brilliant city ; though facts show that the beggary and destitution of the operative classes were frequently as appalling as they have ever been since.

But facts again show that, with the exception of the “west end” world of Dublin, Ireland has continued to advance since the Union, in spite of the systematic discouragement to fair experiment which an unceasing agitation has afforded. The spread of statistical information has, happily, rendered this demonstrable, so I shall not now take the trouble to enter into details. It has advanced, though the termination of the Continental war reduced the prices of agricultural produce so largely as in many cases to throw the farmer helplessly into the power of the landlord—or the demagogue. It has advanced (and this is the strangest fact of all) through the period of local famine and monetary difficulty; advanced, I mean, in every particular not *directly* affected by the famine and the state of the money-market.

“Ireland is in a state of slavery since the Union.” I deny it. I abhor slavery. I would not live in a country of slaves, though I were myself the master. Why should Britain enslave Ireland, when she emancipates the West Indies? For actual and virtual slavery are the same in principle. How has an enslaved country been lately defined? A country in which

the people are prevented from making laws for themselves. What is a country ? A kingdom, or republic. Once Northumberland was a kingdom ; Connaught was once a kingdom too. But Northumberland, Connaught, Ireland, are no longer kingdoms ; they are integral portions of an empire, the people of which *do*, through their representatives (the only possible way) make laws for themselves. If you consider that Ireland was a nation or a kingdom in an absolute sense before the Union, then perhaps it might be argued with some show of plausibility that the people were in a sort slaves ; nay, some might hold that until 1829 there was a tinge of slavery in the condition of the Roman Catholics. But he must needs be an arch democrat who would designate by that strong name the state of things under which the lesser part of one whole is simply subordinated in degree to the greater, while within that subordination all the constituent parts possess equal rank, privileges, and immunities throughout the entire, and an intercommunity of interests and of rights. Complete and perfect “ justice,” as it is called, can never, perhaps, be done to every part in any earthly community. There will be, now and then, an over-readiness or an over-slowness to accede to local demands, to the prejudice, in both cases, of the rest, and of the whole, which is most benefited by an exact distribution of advantages. Hence just causes of complaint will frequently arise. But so long as the complaining people are a free people, that is, so long as



they have a constitutional mode of laying their alleged grievances before the general council of the nation, so as to have them investigated, and either redressed, if they prove real and remediable, or dismissed if they do not,—so long are they bound to abide by that decision, to submit to that authority ; and if they refuse to do so, they are guilty of the offences ranging from disaffection to treason.

“ Ireland should never trust England more, or cordially accept any boon from her, because she first enslaved, and then ill-treated her.” This is the spirit of the “ deadly feuds” of the border clans. It is a spirit which, as it is contrary to the plainest inculcations of Christianity, so it is opposed to the whole tenor of enlightened policy. It is unworthy of a civilized community to acknowledge any such actuating principle as hereditary enmity. Let each generation answer for its own acts, but let not the sins of the fathers be visited on the children, beyond the power of expiation or atonement. Legislation, indeed, ought equally to reject such a spirit. Hence the injustice of making the landlords of to-day responsible for the landlords of a past era. Were such a spirit general there would be no hope for nations. Rapine, oppression, wrong, is interwoven in the early history of every people: if the memory of these were to be perpetual, as controlling influences in subsequent relations, no such thing could exist as international or even neighbourly alliance. England consists of the fragments of seven kingdoms, overrun by depreda-

tors, and conquered by a foreign power, which has become in process of time incorporated with the native population. Ireland, in like manner, is composed of the *debris* of several petty kingdoms, overrun by foreign hordes, invaded and conquered by a foreign power, which has also become, though in a less degree, and at a later period, incorporated with the inhabitants of the country.

In Ireland, as in England, this dominant power adopted the policy of ascendancy, and that by a natural law, which has always caused a more civilized community, coming in upon a less civilized, to domineer and tyrannize to a degree irreconcilable with any principle of justice or policy. England found Ireland at least four centuries behind it in civilization. It is not fairly to be charged against it now that it followed the course universally pursued in those rude ages, and sought rather to subjugate and enslave the conquered country than to elevate it to a participation of its own rights and privileges. It was long before this policy was abandoned; never wholly until 1829. But every step in modern times was *in the right direction*. The progress of opinion was working its course, and Ireland was becoming free by the revolution of mind. It was thus that it was thoroughly emancipated at last. And the proof that, at all events, Ireland is not in a state of slavery since the Union, is furnished by the fact of its having achieved its own *complete* emancipation, without violating the Constitution,—that is, an eman-

cipation which, by the very fact of its having been obtained, proves itself to be a misnomer, and the alleged "slavery" a modification of freedom.

If the despotic policy of *past* England is to be visited on the head of *present* England, then England has a right to take vengeance on herself, and that not only for old but recent transgressions. The hanging of Fauntleroy for forgery was a piece of barbarity, for which the country must atone, even now. Yet the arguments our agitators use in denouncing England for "English misrule," as far as it is *past*, would go this length.

Ireland has made great political advances since the Union,—another proof that she is not in a state of slavery. She has found a voice in the council of the Empire which has been heard and responded to. Her interests have been consulted and furthered:—if not as far as some of her self-constituted leaders would affect to wish, still an advance has been steadily made up to the present hour,—and this is inconsistent with a state of slavery.

Since the passing of the Relief Bill, amongst the measures carried having reference to Ireland are those relating to parliamentary representation, the registration of votes, Irish Church revenues, municipal corporations, National Education, pauper relief, Maynooth College, &c.; all purporting to remove some existing ground of discontent *on the part of Ireland*. If England were mistress, and only looked to her own *separate* interests, she might perhaps have



acted differently—and no one could have blamed her. If Ireland were the predominating power, would she be as tender of English interests as England is of our's? We leave it to the breasts of the popular orators of the day to answer.

As I have already said, let us look at what the Government of the United Kingdom and the Imperial Parliament are now doing for us, not what bygone governments and parliaments have done or omitted to do. If they deal fairly and freely with us, we have no right to throw in their faces what their fathers or grandfathers may have done. The greatest effect past misdeeds ought to have, in the most wary breast, would be to suggest suspicion before the act, but it should never influence us in the reception of measures which we can scrutinize for ourselves. A sullen rejection of the outstretched hand of reconciliation and amity may suit the interests of those who thrive on agitation, or the vanity of those who can endure martyrdom itself for its celebrity, but can never be justified before God or man by any bygone differences, the actual parties to which have long quitted the scene.

All this goes on the assumption of comparatively recent wrongs; whereas I by no means concede that the gradual, even tardy, relaxation of an established system of ascendancy ought to be looked upon with the same vindictive animosity as the primary imposition of such a code might be. The great bulk of mankind entertains a prejudice in favour of what

exists. Conservatism is chronic, reform is paroxysmal. That things *are*, is, in the eyes of the multitude, a justification of their being so; witness the continuation to our own times of West India slavery. An exclusive policy, which would have been universally deemed unrighteous were it to be newly applied, it might be held innocent, at least, if not expedient, to retain, where it was found constituting a part of the existing order of things. The stern ferocity of the new school of agitation is wholly disproportioned even to the wrong it complains of. Not to grant new and exorbitant demands the moment they are made, is surely insufficient to justify unqualified hatred and unmeasured resentment. I hold no argument to be stronger against the principles and policy of the present movement than the disproportion between the passions exhibited and the exciting cause, as it is set forth, clear of declamatory amplification, by the leaders of that movement themselves.

Well, so much for the quarrel. Now, what terms does the aggressive party propose, on the reception of which it will draw off its troops? Even these are not settled. "Repeal!" says one. "Separation!" cries another. "A republic!" shouts a third. "Banishment of the Saxon!" vociferates a fourth. "Extirpation of heresy!" whispers a fifth. The notes are so discordant that a meaning is scarcely to be gathered from them.

Let me see whether I can collect anything intelligible from the outcry.

“Repeal !” What does that mean ? A definition has been sought for the term for twenty years, and is not yet found. O’Connell tried to frame a new Act, to which he attached the insidious name ; but he never for a moment suggested the simple repeal of the old one. He knew that that would never do. He knew that he dared not restore a Protestant legislative body to Ireland. He knew that it would never do to re-enact the farce of an Irish Parliament, in which the dominant minority were the sole representatives, and were so far from being truly the representatives of anything but themselves, that they were purchased over in a mass to resign their existence for ever ; that purchase serving the double purpose of proving their corruption and opening the way for the establishment of the true liberty of Ireland.

“Repeal,” however, was a name which did good service to the cause. What was really sought for from the first, even admitting Repeal to be the end and not the means, was something very different. But it was well known that agitation for such a purpose might be considered unconstitutional, while meetings to petition for the repeal of an Act of Parliament were clearly legal ; hence what was ostensibly put forward was the repeal of a certain Act, though at the very time the negative was altogether superseded by the positive portion of the proposed measure, which was nothing less than to raise Ire-



land, for the first time, to the rank of a nation, at once *separate* and *free*.

The Government of the day was greatly to be reprehended for not detecting this stratagem. Since it has been more than intimated by successive Governments that Repeal agitation is, in spirit, unconstitutional, it necessarily follows that what is sought for must be considered by them to be so also. It was easy, therefore, at the outset, to have discriminated between the name and the substance of the subject-matter of the agitation, and to have dealt with the latter summarily, and as it deserved.

But the name was left as a cloak and as a shield to hide and protect the imposture. It is now too late to remove it. I am content to expose what it conceals.

Repeal means, as it always meant, a NEW CONSTITUTION FOR IRELAND.

As to the form of that constitution, repealers already differ. My course will be, instead of inquiring into the avowed or concealed objects of this or that person, now figuring prominently in the business, to follow, as nearly as I can, the current of probabilities, and endeavour to trace the progress of future events by the indications of existing circumstances, and the general nature of the human mind. I do so, not because I wish to quarrel with any honest well-wisher to his country because he happens to be sanguine; but because, on a calm review of the past, and on calculations for the future grounded on that re-

view, I differ from most of those persons who now so enthusiastically revel in anticipations of the glorious destiny of Ireland, should their efforts prove successful ; and because, moreover, I believe enthusiasm to disqualify a man in a great degree, from making sound guesses at contingent events, as excitement of any kind directly interferes with the mental processes. I will readily be believed when I say that if my sober calculations had brought me to the same results as these brilliant day-dreams, I should with the truest joy adopt them ; because it cannot be denied that they present something far more grand and magnificent as the destiny of my country, than anything I have been able to realize to myself ;—and this is, of course, my chief concern. But events do not occur because they are prefigured in the imagination ; though they sometimes do, as they are fore-shown in the theory of the philosopher.

I will suppose that “ Repeal ” is carried, either by capitulation, sap, or storm. A constitution is framed for Ireland, by which she shall have her two houses of Parliament, with the Queen of Great Britain as Sovereign. But the laws passed in the United Kingdom must be deemed, for the present, valid in the newly-constituted assembly, which would have the effect of continuing the franchise as it at present exists, and admitting Roman Catholics to sit in both houses of Parliament. A new schedule of counties, cities, boroughs, &c., must of course be framed ; and, in the Lords, the question of spiritual peerages be settled in the first instance. I scarcely see how this

could be amicably adjusted without either admitting the whole Roman Catholic hierarchy, strengthened, perhaps, by a band of mitred abbots and priors, as in former times, to seats in the House of Lords ; or by excluding the Protestant bishops, whose ranks, even in case they are admitted, are now thinned by the operation of the Church Temporalities' Act. Indeed, I cannot believe but that "Repeal," by an amicable arrangement, must involve as a preliminary the utter and total extinction of the Established Church in Ireland, which would have the effect of excluding the bishops from the House of Lords altogether.

Suppose a Parliament, constituted in some such way, to assemble in Dublin,—and this is taking the most favourable view of the case, for it assumes that the new constitution is granted by the Imperial Parliament, and received by the Irish *Nation*, without a struggle ; one great point is gained,—members are on the spot, out of reach of Imperial influence or control, within reach of the Irish populace ;—would Imperial interests be long regarded ?

The House of Commons would, in all probability, from the first, contain a majority of Roman Catholics, in the proportion, probably, of 5 to 2. It would contain all those persons who have been lately so clamorous for a "Domestic Parliament," as well as the new Republican party.

We can almost fancy we hear the echoes of the first debate. Have we a "Domestic" Parliament as long as the Crown—in itself possessing the power of nullifying all our Acts—rests on the head of a



*foreigner*? All the arguments so much in vogue of late years, against "Saxon" usurpation, would now tell with renewed strength against this "monstrous constitutional anomaly,"—an "alien," a "stranger," an "absentee," "under foreign influence,"—and this, whether the Sovereign should act at all times through a "Saxon" Lord Lieutenant, or occasionally vary the scene by vouchsafing a visit in person.

Here are the elements of strife already at work. But suppose the Commons had agreed upon some strong measure calculated to get rid of this anomaly, there are still the Lords between them and their purpose. Are there no questions relative to the constitution of that house which would demand an early notice? Not to dwell on "republican" abhorrence of all hereditary distinctions, would it be long tolerated that those Peers, whose titles are asserted to have been the prices of their votes on the Union question, should be suffered to retain seats in a house called into existence by the repeal of the very Act which was the foundation of their nobility? But the exclusion of Union Peers would suggest a right to go back and examine the origin and *tenure* of dignities, which might without much difficulty be explained into a precedent in other matters. Surely, too, those Peers who enjoyed English or Scotch honours, would be at least called upon to *make their election*. Well, if the two houses came into collision, everybody knows which must go. And, the obstacle once removed, the House of Commons stands face to

face with the Sovereign. Nor will this attitude of opposition be found without precedent in Irish history. From 1169 to 1641 every insurrection was avowedly pointed against *the domination of England*; not directed to the lower object of a claim of a constitution, or a charter, or extended popular rights; but, where anything more defined than retaliation or rapine was to be traced, aiming to supplant the territorial supremacy of the British Crown.

By what title does Queen Victoria sit on the throne of these realms? By Acts of Parliament, passed in both kingdoms, at a time when the Roman Catholics were under political disabilities; which Acts interrupted the legal succession, for the purpose of excluding Roman Catholics. Were it not for these Acts she would never have been our Sovereign. *But who would?* There is an individual in existence, who is the legal heir to the British Crown (and, of course, to the Irish), and who would now wear it, but for the circumstance of his ancestors and himself being Roman Catholics. The Queen is only a *statutable* Sovereign. Are these Acts to bind an independent Parliament in a "Catholic" country? Here is a grievance?

The Sovereign is now at issue with her "kingdom" of Ireland. Which is to yield? Neither will submit without war. The "separation," now so openly talked of, must then inevitably take place, at least pending the struggle. And, let it be recollected, great additional powers would be afforded to

Ireland for a contest with England, by her possessing a Parliament of her own. England would then engage, not with mere lawless insurgents, but with a system needing only an executive to be the government of the country,—having, to a great degree, its resources at command,—presenting a show of authority,—and assuming, with some truth, to represent a nation.

The constitution will, therefore, have by this time taken a “republican” form. The Lords must have been annihilated at the very commencement of the struggle, as cramping the measures of the Commons; the franchise must necessarily have been extended; and, finally, a provisional government must have been appointed *to act*.

“Death to the Saxon” will naturally be the next cry,—if not literally, at least politically interpreted. The neutral Anglo-Irish as well as the English must go, or join the movement. They must *suffer*, whether they go or not, if they have previously expressed sentiments hostile to the new state of things. The principle of “Ireland for the Irish” will be acted upon by the mob, as “France for the French” has lately been.

But long before this another voice will have been heard,—*the cry of the poor for bread*. The open throat of famine will howl nearer and nearer, as trade, commerce, manufactures, and agriculture lie idle, awaiting peace. The absentee may have returned home, but this will not feed and employ millions. Now come the acreless representatives of native families, clamouring for an inquisition into forfeited titles, the records of which at this moment exist at Maynooth.



Who shall refuse their demand?—a demand, backed by the hungry populace on the one hand, and the rent-paying farmer on the other ; the former conceiving that the more thoroughly property is unsettled the better chance they will have in the scramble ; the latter believing that the annihilation of existing leases, under such circumstances, must leave him where he is, either as proprietor, or at such a rent as he may think proper to pay.

It may be worth while here to show the farmer how utterly he mistakes his position, if he indulges in any notions of this kind. His title is derived immediately from the lessor, whom he gets rid of. Legally, then, he should go with his landlord. But he considers that the effect of this new confiscation will be to leave him where he is, only relieving him from his rent. Where, then, are the *claimants* to these estates ? And, if they be forthcoming and have their claims allowed, will he not stand in the position of an occupant without title ? I am no lawyer, as I have already said, but this seems to me to be common sense.

Suppose, however (which must ensue), that property, including land, is ultimately redistributed by the new Government, in order to carry out the spirit of their own revolution and answer the clamour of starving millions, who will otherwise by physical force overwhelm everything but themselves ; how would the redistribution affect the small farmer ? It could not better him. He never could expect *more* than he has. The distribution of land to relieve

pauperism must be infinitesimal. But could he, under any probable scale of distribution, *retain* it? Certainly not, unless saddled with burdens, in some shape or other, as grievous at least as his rent was ; and, recollect, even to his own farm he has only a sort of *primâ facie claim*,—he has no *right*, not even tenant-right, on his side ; he must take what is awarded him. But in the interim, before all this laborious machinery of redistribution is brought into play, what security has he in his farm? His lease is gone ; any lawless combination may turn him out of *possession*, and then behold him as a simple claimant *at law* of lands to which he has no recognised title whatever. Will it not be an enviable position when he finds himself without an acre, a shilling, a lease, or a title, his whole hope resting on a claim *at law* or *in equity*, in revolutionizing Ireland!

There is one further phase in the imaginary panorama. Religion will not shrink from her altars because they reek.

Observe how studiously this element of strife is kept out of sight now ; I mean kept out of sight in the theories and orations of the new school of agitation. The republicans are without a bias on this head. Every man shall believe as he likes. In point of fact, however, religion *has* drawn the visible line of difference. I need not show how : those who have read so far will understand me.

Now I believe that, however this topic may be kept in the back-ground during peace, and before blood has flowed, the war, when it once begins, will

inevitably be *a religious war*. And, moreover, I believe that, when once the elements of strife have begun to work, they will never permanently settle down again until a Roman Catholic monarchy be established closely approaching to despotism.

Observe the position Protestants, clergy and laity, would hold in Ireland thus circumstanced, and compare it with that Roman Catholics now occupy. They would be a minority, and the majority would be the dominant class. In other words, they would be at the mercy of that class. But, worse than this, they would not be recognised as a Christian community by Roman Catholics, nor would their clergy be considered as such; whereas Protestants do consider the Romish as a Christian Church, and its clergy as priests. Protestants would be—as they now are—simply *heretics*.

Under such a despotism “extirpation of heresy” may possibly be attempted.

And this is the place to give a word—and one word is enough—to a party which, of all others, I look upon as the most infatuated and unintelligible. I mean *Protestant Repealers*. What it is these good, easy men expect, is more than either I—or they—can say. If they believe *now*, that Repeal itself could stop the open mouths of famine, rapacity, and treason, that it would prove even a sop to this Cerberus, they are of all men the most credulous. A delirium such as this is almost too strong to be argued with. They stand in the midst of a breach, up which one force is rushing, down which the other is aiming, and tranquilly ex-



hort the defenders to admit the storming party, who will be quite content to enter, and no more ! With easy philosophy they would have Repeal for their own objects, and disregard the clamour of those who want it for their's. They hope to figure in an Irish Parliament, without considering what that Parliament will do ; and forgetting that their petty projects for some fancied exaltation of the national tone, will be the first to be run down and trampled upon by the rush of a revolution. These high-minded visionaries, who are unable to see the signs of the times, on account of the loftiness of their own aspirations, may *anticipate* what all must *admire*—the bright picture lately drawn by the venerable advocate, of this country existing happy, prosperous, and contented for centuries, with its domestic Parliament, under a common Sovereign with England !

We have arrived at a persecuting despotism, in the hands of Roman Catholics:—and this is the last of the speculations in which I will indulge.

I know that any one who pleases may reject any or all of them. Their soundness never can be proved before the event. But if people object to them as being too bold and startling, I answer, first, that they appear so principally because the sequence is, in a projection like this, immediate, not gradual. If the perspective were behind us, as history, instead of before us, as speculation, there would be plenty of people ready to cry: “ How perfectly naturally all these events followed each other ! ” “ How was it that they were not foreseen and guarded against ? ”

Though wonders, it is said, never cease, it is wonderful how soon *surprise* ceases when the feeling has been too heavily taxed ; and, moreover, any one unforeseen change renders further change the more probable ; it opens the sluices of innovation. And I answer, secondly, that instances are not wanting in modern times of events just as miraculous following each other almost as rapidly as they could be enumerated.

In France, on the outbreak of the first Revolution, seven weeks were sufficient to annihilate the authority of the peers, and ten, virtually, that of the crown. On the 4th of May, 1789, the States General, composed of three estates, met at Versailles. By the 19th of June the “National Assembly” had usurped their whole authority in its own body: and on the 13th of July, its resolution, in the teeth of the royal declaration, that “the Assembly persisted in all its former decrees,” effectually and at once established its independence of the crown.

I say I will go no farther in speculations, though the subject is far from being exhausted,—I mean, far from having arrived at the line at which calculation lapses into conjecture. It would be easy to sketch, by anticipation, the effect of the throwing back upon Ireland of the two-fifteenths estimated as her contribution to the State, and charging her with her own ordinary and extraordinary expenses:—as to paying the interest of her debt, that, of course, would be out of the question. But not even confiscation would square her accounts. Without capital or commerce,

manufactures or resources, without army or navy, bullion or credit, has she that within her which could feed her population in peace, not to speak of supplying them in war? And this, when the strongest and richest part of Ireland will be *against* her? Could she cope with the prosperous and indignant NORTH, bearing down upon her in her extremity, and backed, if need should be, with the best blood of England and Scotland? Recollect, the only bond of union which *could* exist between the North and the rest of Ireland, would be republicanism; and this, if I am right in my surmises, is not the form the Government will ultimately assume.

I might, by a fair process of analogy, prefigure the expedients to which a Government would be driven to raise supplies. In France, during this year, the capital of the nation diminished *one-half* in three months. What would *any* property be worth here in the same time? and dare we place a limit to the *assignats* which would be had recourse to, within view of bankruptcy?

I might—I wish I could avoid it—deviate into the side-paths of this open road, and speak of objects some consider of less import. The private episodes of assassination, the local outrages, the gratification of long-cherished revenge, where distress has been systematically goaded into rage,—the oppression of the weak,—the slaughter of the helpless,—those nameless horrors which hang upon the track of civil war, which would raise *this* war above all others in hideous pre-eminence,—all crowd the path on either side.



I will not go farther into speculations, because I believe that “the game’s up” with the revolutionists.

But I will exhibit what is *not* speculative in the future, in case the present disaffection pass into rebellion. Ireland cannot contend single-handed against Great Britain. That is allowed on all sides. She must seek and obtain succour from some one or other of those “free nations” she loves to praise and seeks to imitate. Ireland will not only be the scene of a civil war, but the theatre of a general one.

Have the eloquent gentlemen who paint her future in such bright colours ever hinted at *this*? Hostile British Ireland must have, on the one hand, garrisons (now indeed hostile, for she has made them so) occupying positions through the country,—and on the other, *friendly* armies—in other words, hosts of foreign troops—quartered upon her. Let Belgium say whether it is an agreeable thing to be considered a convenient battle-ground, or to have even an amicable force of strangers billeted upon a nation. The reply would probably be, “defend me from my friends !”

How would the foreign commissariat be supplied? Will allies fight without being fed, or paid, or both?—allies, bound by none of the civil laws which render an armed force only a terror to evil-doers, and insolent and rapacious in proportion as they witness the inferior condition of the mass of the people, and begin to feel the effects of the national poverty. Would an American army long sympathize with what to their eyes would appear barbarism and beggary? Would a French force long forego the refinements

and civilization they were accustomed to for a shivering encampment on an Irish bog? They never would put out a hand for Ireland except for the purpose of embarrassing England; and even this, once before, and under nearly similar circumstances, was not enough to prevent them from showing their contempt and disgust of everything they witnessed here, and their distaste for a service in which neither credit nor amusement were to be found.

What a bright picture Ireland would present as a “theatre of war!” Bristling brigades marching over the poor man’s corn and meadow, and small hopes from an action of trespass! His potatoes in his *corran*, his pig in his *fail*, seized upon by a whiskered trooper, who talks some gibberish to him, and throws down a coin as the price of what he takes—at his own valuation! Swaggering roysterers inspecting the shrinking charms that grace the seclusion of private families, with the license of a “protecting force!”

Not a word of all *this* is imagination. This is a part of the picture which **MUST** be realized. Is the honest farmer, the plain tradesman,—nay, the labouring peasant, with all his distress, prepared for *this*?

Well, the strife must have an end sooner or later. I must confess, as an Irishman, I do not like to think of the consequences to myself and to my country, even under the best of circumstances,—I mean the subjugation of the rebels, the expulsion of the foreign force, peace once again in Ireland. We are thrown back centuries,—we are a disgraced portion of the empire,—we almost force that empire, for its own

sake, to restrict us in some of our liberties. We have lost more, perhaps, than we can ever regain.

But still we shall belong to, and form a part of, the great empire of Britain, and in such a relation our wounds may be healed sooner than we can now dare to hope. But, under less favourable circumstances, having “gained our point,” having shaken off British connexion, having cleared our country of foreign troops (*if we can*), where shall we find ourselves?

First of all, in famine and fever. Not a famine from which, as a providential visitation, the poor man can appeal to the charity of man and the mercy of God ; not the fever of privation, in which every hand is ready to minister a remedy, every voice to say a word of comfort: but the famine of the spendthrift, the fever of the debauchee.

Next, in the position of a small and resourceless nation, without capital, commerce, or manufactures ; within arm’s length of an ejected co-partner of all the benefits of our insular position, now justly incensed, armed with all the animosity which such a struggle must have given birth to, and ready to use that arm—one of the mightiest upon earth—either, like a mesmeriser’s, to benumb and paralyze our best energies, or, in its strength, to smite the four corners of the land continually. We must always be a small power, and, having to deal with the greater powers of Europe, must of necessity, in case of a general struggle, fall a prey to some one of them. Such has been invariably the case in European politics. We must keep watch and ward night and day ;



always be bristling with defence on the side of England; and be content to resign tranquillity and comfort, and all that makes life sweet to the virtuous and the good, for that thing, that phantom, called LIBERTY, which we seek through fire and sword, and which really exists on our hearths under the name of contentment, and in our fields in the furrow of industry.

It is more than any metaphor or license can justify, to call us, Irishmen, slaves. Only the other day a period was given us: we were told, if certain things were not done at a certain time, we should be slaves for ever, and deserved to be so. Well, the time is past; the certain things were not done;—and yet I cannot persuade myself that I am a slave, or that any one of my neighbours is so. Men cannot be slaves without knowing it. As long as I have my body and my mind, my heart and my conscience free, I shall laugh at him who would persuade me that I am a slave. The French are slaves now, if you please; so are the Russians; so are the Americans, in a degree, for they dare not even think contrary to what is called “Public Opinion,” though it be according to their consciences: but to tell me that an Irishman is a slave, who, if he have any stake in the country at all, makes his own laws through his representatives; who exercises his religion as he pleases; who can claim defence in war and support in peace; who has his rights acknowledged and his wrongs redressed by impartial tribunals; who is even permitted to strike terror by demonstrations of force, as long as their object is

ever so faintly equivocal; who, be he the humblest peasant who ever turned the sod, may rise through every gradation of advance, to the loftiest station in law, divinity, the arts, sciences, or literature, the State has power to confer, without a single political obstacle in his way;—to call, I say, a citizen thus circumstanced *a slave*, transcends all the limits of amplification, and becomes simply ridiculous.

The worst of all this movement is, that it is in the wrong direction; against the current of sound philosophy, and, as far as I can see, contrary to the design of nature and Providence.

It will be necessary to raise ourselves up a little from the level of the present, to gain a clear view of this. Civilization, as it advances, has a natural tendency to draw not only man and man together, but community and community, by the thousand cords of mutual benefit, precisely as science, in its advance, facilitates their physical intercourse. Man was originally one family. It will be one family again, when it has reached its maximum of civilization. It was while men were ignorant and unenlightened that they held aloof from each other. Those distinctions which divided them when intercourse of thought and person was difficult or rare, become gradually obliterated by the friction of intercommunication, which drives its wheels over the impediments of barbarism, and will finally break down all barriers less extensive than those that enclose the human family at large. With our island, in particular, each year makes this more manifest. At the time of the Union,

less than half a century ago, we stood at a distance from the sister island more vast, for all the purposes of life, than America does now. Related as we were even then, in language, laws, manners, and customs, as well as by social ties, we have been drawn ten times nearer to the heart of England since. Moral and physical approximation has knit a union beyond the power of legislation to strengthen, and, I believe in my soul, beyond the power of agitation to dissolve. That process is silently proceeding in spite of the noisy declamation around us, because it is true and natural, and, therefore, eternal ; whereas the obstructing influence is paroxysmal and false, and therefore fated to yield. All that such an influence can do is to retard what *must* happen sooner or later, and what all good men must wish to happen soon,—the fraternization of the human family.

The game's up. "The Irish League" I hold to be a retrograde movement ; because the dissension of a large society must ever be weaker than the union of a small one.

The game's up. I am an anonymous pamphleteer, and have no business to offer advice. What I have done is what any one might do. I have stated what I believe to be facts, and I have drawn what I consider to be fair deductions from them. Any one can judge whether I am correct in my facts, and sound in my inferences. It may be that in these latter I am mistaken. It may be that I may look back to this little tract, as to a single stone in a waterway, the sole remains of a dam swept away by the



resistless current of revolution. Any one, nevertheless, is at liberty to throw out conjectures;—but advice should come recommended by character and authority. A nameless writer can show neither; so I offer none. How to profit by a lesson, how to derive advantage from experience, must be left to others, or to the breast of each, to determine. But this much I may say, that those qualities which would disgrace us as individuals can never ennoble us as a community; that history can offer no precedent which shall justify a dereliction from the immutable code of morality; and, furthermore, that the object which we all profess to seek for—the welfare of our country—will be promoted more effectually by the exercise of individual virtue than by the organization of the most powerful party. Where the Great Pattern of humanity was set up for us to imitate, slavery existed in its worst form. How did that divine teacher set about its abolition? Not by denouncing it in terms, but by preaching those doctrines which tend to emancipate the whole human race.

And I say, in like manner, truth and moderation are all the liberty we now want in this country. The distress we deplore will be borne with resignation; the relief we have availed ourselves of will be acknowledged with gratitude; the prosperity we sigh for will be attained in the shortest possible space of time, by the silent working of natural causes, as the fruit of individual fortitude, industry, enterprise, and virtue.

THE END.

## A STITCH IN TIME.

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It is a great comfort to reflect that no harm is done yet.

Not a blow has been struck. Threatening as the aspect of things undoubtedly is, still it is *only* threatening,—disaffection is not yet REBELLION.

I speak, of course, of the present *moment*. The words I write, before the press descends upon them, may belong to a by-gone era. In the winnowing of an hour, all that characterizes the Present may have passed into history, and my conjectures gone off to the winds.

Nevertheless, no man can do more than study, observe, and speculate, as respects the past, the present, and the future. In the last, if he have fairly fulfilled the first two duties, he need not blush to be mistaken.

It is much that the Rubicon of revolution has not been passed.

Few consider how much is preserved with the preservation of the existing order of things,—how much is gained when nothing is lost. In an old community,

in which any change must be a bloody disruption of all existing cohesion, to have survived the late catastrophes of Europe argues one of two things,—either that the grasp of despotism is too strong upon a country to allow it to move, or that its adjustments can bear a shock without dislocation. Russia is an example of the former case. I think I may safely take the British Empire as an instance of the latter. Some commotion was naturally felt in these countries, acting on masses which have only a physical and not a political or constitutional coherence; just as, in the year 1755, during the earthquake of Lisbon, bodies of *water* were observed to be agitated,—to fluctuate and bubble,—as far from the centre of action as certain parts of these islands, while the land surrounding them was undisturbed by a shock. But the arrangement of things has remained sound and safe. The strata of society hold together. The grain, and the timber, the cottage, the cathedral, and the palace, which they underlie, continue uninjured; and the millions they bear on their surface find that they have not relied on their stability in vain.

If man's best efforts be fruitless without the concurrent assistance of Providence, we owe a debt of gratitude to God, for having enabled this great Empire gradually to fabricate a framework of society sufficiently flexible to bend with the storm, and sufficiently firm to survive it.

With us, no doubt, as perhaps with every nation, revolution was a law of our being. The disease was



to be passed through, like the measles or hooping-cough. We could not, from the unlettered wildness of the middle ages, reach to political years of discretion, without undergoing the usual maladies incidental to infancy. But as such complaints are best got over early, we had the attack in time, and stood it without chronic injury to our constitution,—nay, with permanent advantage to it.

By *we*, of course I mean the British Islands,—for the revolutions in England were reflected in Scotland and Ireland ; and, since the Union, we are one empire, Ireland partaking of all the benefits secured by the revolutions of England.

England, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, went through phases precisely and curiously analogous to those exhibited in France in the eighteenth and nineteenth. But she secured more liberty, prosperity, religion, and happiness, after they had passed away, than France has done, or is likely to do, with all her expenditure of human life. It is worth while to consider how.

In the first place, in England the religious reformation and the political revolution did not take place simultaneously.

Again, the breaking down of superstition and priestcraft in England made room for a pure and reformed Christian faith ; whereas, in France, the efforts of a few witty sceptics succeeded in demolishing the old form of corrupted Romanism, without having prepared a new mould for the national wor-

ship to run into. Hence, the masses cooled down formlessly,—that is, in infidelity.

This, of course, had its effect on the political revolution, which ran concurrently with the religious in the latter country. Complete license having been recognised in religious matters, complete liberty was the corresponding recognition in politics. The idea of social subjugation to any person, or assemblage of persons, was naturally repudiated, with the idea of subjugation to a divine power. The creed was that of reason ; and reason (by which we are “as gods”) tells a man that no being on earth, or in heaven, has a right to rule over him, or to deprive him of so much as a fragment of his liberty.

In England, in the seventeenth century, the course of things was different ; because religion had already gone through its crisis, and was fixed on a firm basis before the political convulsion supervened.

Here, in Ireland, our democratic leaders are seeking to bring about the political revolution *before* the religious reformation. Most of those who are serious amongst them are, as their public code of political and social morality witnesses, unquestionably Jacobins. In this place I put aside the Old Ireland party altogether, where principles are in question ; for I conceive them to be playing a game, and assisting the democratic section for other and concealed purposes, just as I believe the great founder and leader of that party to have been playing the Jesuit during the greater portion of his life.

Thus imbued with infidelity, they urge revolution upon the country, in the face of the religion of the vast majority of the population ; that is, first, indirectly, by compassing and extolling acts which that religion, as a Christian religion, must under any circumstances discountenance ; and secondly, directly, not only by declaring religious differences to be of little or no importance, politically considered, but by sneering on every admissible occasion at religion itself in the abstract, and at its precepts, whenever they interfere with those great heathen maxims which justify the passions of pride, hate, and revenge, and acknowledge a “ God of battles.”

Our safety *ought* to lie in this circumstance. We *ought* to be sure of a people who are eminently devoted to their Church, whose Church is well manned with ministers, and who are politically tampered with chiefly by those who make light of all creeds and do not even profess their’s.

We *ought* to feel complete confidence. Why *do* we not ? Alas ! can the question be answered without casting a heavy imputation somewhere ? Let us, as being the most charitable course, lay it to the mistaken casuistry which allows of a lesser evil for the acquisition of a greater good, that the Roman Catholic priesthood of Ireland have suffered themselves to swerve so widely from their plain duty. For, were they true to their own faith, as it is delivered to them in the Bible, they would make every altar a focus of denunciation—of what ?—*not* of constituted authori-



ties, which the Scripture commands them to reverence,—*not* of actions which are purely secular,—*not* of men or bodies of men with whom it is not their province to interfere,—but of principles alien to the Christian creed which Christian ministers are bound to inculcate,—of passions that creed boldly anathematizes,—of acts unequivocally evil, because evil under any circumstances of provocation.

But a blindness seems to have fallen upon the Romanist clerical body in this country. Not to speak of the sacred obligation, it is manifestly for their own interest that they should stand thus forward. I mean, for their own interest, in any narrower sense than that which presupposes the disruption of the empire. And even on that supposition *now* it would not be difficult to show that the chance of bettering themselves by their present course is very precarious indeed. Day after day the works of the movement party are carried closer to the citadel of old beliefs. For every sap driven in one direction against the Imperial government, a branch diverges in the other against priestcraft and spiritual subjugation.

This, I think, seems to have been perceived at Rome lately. But the priesthood at home are slow to alter their tactics. Nevertheless they *must* do so, speedily, openly, and in earnest, or *it will be too late*.

If they do, we are safe for the present. I mean, safe from any immediate and grave disaster. I firmly believe we are safe from dismemberment, whether

they do or not. But, as I began by saying, it is a great matter that blood has not been spilt—and it is a great object to prevent its being so ; perhaps “a stitch in time” may help in its humble way to accomplish this. I confess I am impatient to see the priesthood in a body (for in particular instances, to their honour, they have done so) taking up the exalted tone of Christian teachers ; and, leaving it to the Author of Christianity to work political good out of it as to Him it may seem fit, simply preaching what they are commanded to do—forbearance, meekness, long-suffering, gentleness, brotherly love. I want to see them do violence to their secret prejudices and predilections, to their self-interest and to their vanity, and unhesitatingly denounce those acts, no matter by whom committed, which cannot stand the test of the Christian code. I would have them more anxious to assert their own characters as teachers appointed of God, against the suspicions of good men in this and every other country upon earth, than stand up as counsel for criminals, though those criminals should happen to belong to their own flock, and have much to palliate their guilt. I am impatient to witness this, not only on their own account, but on that of my countrymen : for I would infinitely prefer seeing our population still despotically swayed as they have been by their ministers, to witnessing an emancipation which would throw them into the ranks of that heartless infidelity now offering to “fraternize” with them. A corrupted Christian creed may wink at, or uphold, many abuses ;

but the rejection of religious principle must originate—and perpetuate—every political evil.

I want no “pledges.” I have no faith in them. I want acts. I want to see the influence of acts. I have already, on a previous occasion, adverted to the worthlessness of pledges, however solemnly proffered and renewed. But Ireland has a right to expect a practical proof that there is sincerity at least in conduct dictated by self-interest. What has she witnessed instead? Now, observe. Up to a few months ago, it had seemed the object—as it certainly was the policy—of the Roman Catholic clergy to discourage the “Young Ireland” party. Accordingly, it was discouraged formally, repeatedly, unequivocally, and publicly. There was no room for mistake. The party and the partisans were alike stigmatized as immoral, detestable, horrible, and unchristian. Well, this was all as it should be. But about that time—for what reason is not so apparent—a new course was agreed upon; and what was the consequence? Why, last month a coalition with this very party, and these very men, was cordially assented to by those identical prelates who had been most forward and persevering in the grand commination of them both!—a coalition, too, in which it must have been evident that “Old Ireland” fell, resourceless and exhausted, into the hands—and measures—of its more vigorous rival.

Here is a mystery. Where is the clue? Is it sheer weakness? Is it the hope to bend the “young” to the “old”? Is it—heaven forbid that it be so!—the



fable of the lion expected to be enacted in our own country, and at the present day? Can it be that there is the show of throwing the corrective of priestly influence into this Jacobin movement, in order that, in case of reverse, the Church may represent itself as having been the spirit of order, vainly endeavouring to temper the starkness of disaffection; while, in case of success, it may calmly reckon upon the failure of the free-thinking arm of the revolution, and step into all the advantages gained by an independent position, which leaves it master over a devoted and submissive population?

I am far from believing that such is really the course the Romanist clergy have mapped out for themselves. But their present stretches are so bold, that one is driven to hoist vague conjectures in order to gain sight of them on either tack. I have a three-fold reason for not believing it to be their line of policy: first, it is too iniquitous to be defended, under any license of casuistry, by a responsible order before the eyes of Europe; secondly, because the hazard is too tremendous to be envisaged by any prudent and cautious body of men; and, thirdly, because, on the supposition that their proceedings are preconcerted, there seems to be a far more advantageous *tactique* open to them.

I know the power of that body, and I wish to think well of them. We *might* owe a share of the political salvation of our country to them. Why will they not make us their debtors to that incalculable amount? *Imperial* Ireland would never forget it to

them. Do they cherish any hope that *republican* gratitude would be equally long-lived?

Let them recollect that the pen of HISTORY hangs over them—that comprehensive chronicle of human events, a few brief lines of which discuss the sum of intricate and long-protracted manœuvres. “The Romanist priesthood in Ireland, at the period in question, lent their aid, more or less openly, to the political disorganization of the empire, for purposes of their own.” Such may be the sole record for posterity. Or: “The Catholic clergy, so long suspected of having aided the schemes of O’Connell for their own interests, now proved their loyalty to their earthly—and heavenly—Sovereigns; and, throwing their powerful influence into the scale at the hour of Ireland’s peril, neutralized, by the simple preaching of the doctrines of Christianity, the most desperate efforts of her enemies.”

A great reaction has set in throughout Europe within the short time that has elapsed since I issued my first tract.

Then, Revolution was on the march, drums beating, colours flying. Not quite as triumphant as at the first, it is true, for it began to be pinched for subsistence; but still it *was* advancing,—and the inscription on its banners was, THE OMNIPOTENCE of THE PEOPLE.

It is wonderful how trifling a circumstance may change the whole aspect of affairs over the face of the world. A scene of carnage, shocking to think of,

has been enacted in the great continental centre of civilization. It has terminated, for the present, in favour of order, and against anarchy; but this would have had little effect beyond its own sphere, but for one discovery, made late in the conflict,—a mere piece of military experience, apparently of no consequence to any one but an engineer or an artillery officer. It was simply this, *that a barricade is no longer impregnable*. The secret of attack is now known. Even in Paris they are already considered useless. Probably, they will never again be had recourse to.

Lord Clarendon has lost no time. From the first, he dealt with the danger here as its importance demanded, and as his resources enabled him to do. As soon as he saw us safe from immediate foreign invasion, and an immediate outbreak in England;—as soon as we had a law which met the case, *he acted*. But it was only to take a single step. That step might have proved sufficient to have disabled the opponents of order altogether. And if it had, he would, of course, never have taken a second in the same direction. But a lesson had been learned here from the organizations of France, which was put in practice, I verily believe, as a forlorn hope, by those leaders of disaffection who were reduced to their wits' end by the fate of their comrade. The system of CLUBS had hastened the revolution of February, and now threatened to prove too much for the friends of order in France. Accordingly, clubs were organized throughout Ireland; and, the manœuvre succeeding beyond the hopes of



its instigators, the tone of confident menace was once more assumed,—and with good reason. Up to the last month, the doctrine which had been gaining ground in Europe for half a century, that the *people*,—that is, the unclassified mass of the population, without reference to any quality but physical force, or numbers,—were, not only in theory but in fact, sovereign,—had seemed to derive additional confirmation from every political event ; and, however questionable the theory might be deemed, it was the *fact* that was the point to be regarded : since if the people were really able, in an organized community, to take the law into their own hands, no matter whether they were right or wrong in doing so, no one can doubt that they would do so, without going into the ethics of the question.

But France, which seems destined—if not for its sins, I know not why—to be the *corpus vile* on which the terrible social experiments of the civilized world are to be made, has, since that period settled the question at once and for ever. It is now known, by the ghastly evidence of hills of human bodies, that, in the cause of order, a regular army will fight to the death against its own countrymen. It is known that peaceful citizens will not only array themselves in military semblance for the purpose of overawing popular demonstrations, but will dye their hands in their neighbour's blood in order to suppress rebellion ; citizens, too, with their own causes of complaint against their government,—with

their own distrust of the administration under which they act. It is known that a fortress more formidable and more vast than any which engineering skill ever constructed, and manned by hundreds of thousands of desperate, determined men, goaded by every passion of hate and hope which can strengthen a heart and nerve an arm, and whose movements were directed by one preconcerted and masterly plan, can be stormed, under peculiar circumstances of disadvantage,—ignorance of the enemy's defences, mistaken tactics, raw troops, conflicting commands,—by the honest energy of men who had already proved, as the deeds of February could witness, that “liberty” was at least as precious to them as to their opponents. It is known, moreover, as I have already said, that the peculiar mode of defence adopted by insurgents in cities is no longer availing anywhere ; the barricade can be turned, under the most unfavourable circumstances, with comparatively little difficulty or danger.

All this the world has learned from the affair of Paris in June. We have all of us learned it. The disaffected here have learned it. The executive has learned it. There is no longer any hope of treating with the leaders of the movement ; they have gone too far to recede. It is better that they should be felons now, than traitors by and by. Accordingly, the greater number of these men have been arrested, and must abide their trial as offenders against the laws of their country ; whilst extraordinary powers have been vested by Parliament in the Lord Lieu-



tenant, to enable him to meet the impending danger with effect.

And here I must digress for a moment, to guard against being mistaken in what I said of the last insurrection in Paris. I merely spoke of what had occurred there as a *fact*, and of the instruction to be derived to us from that fact. I am not by any means prepared to affirm that the insurrection was unprovoked, or even unjustifiable, or that the Government of France set itself to crush the insurgents with clean hands. This is not necessary for my case. We must recollect that a half-fed population had been instigated to dethrone the king of their own choosing, by the promise that they should be whole-fed. A hard-worked and scantily paid class were told that, for the accomplished dethronement, they should have easy work and high wages. This was quite intelligible, and very agreeable news. Clever men,—men of education and logic,—men who could talk down plain practical reasoners, had told them so. It was no vision of the enthusiast,—no mirage of unslaked thirst, conjuring up rivers in the desert. Oh, no! It was philosophy—it was science—it was statistics—it was political economy—it was the induction of reason—it was the nineteenth century! Well: they did dethrone the king; they did it humanely, and spilt no unnecessary blood; they did it honestly, and abstained from pillage. They placed the men who had made those promises to them in power, and submitted themselves placidly and im-



plicitly to their guidance. They did this at an immediate loss ; for the disturbance of order and of the old system of course interfered with trade, commerce, and manufactures, as business had previously been conducted. In the interval, they were all the worse for it.

The theories were ostentatiously reduced to practice. Competition was quite out of fashion. Men blushed to think that they had ever acted on so ridiculous a principle. "Fraternity" was the word. Definitions were remodelled. "Labour" was held to mean wholesome exercise ; "wages," national dividends ; and so on. And then the people looked from day to day for the promised prosperity, plenty, and happiness. They were wonderfully patient. During three of the severest months of the year they submitted to subsist on the short commons of hope. But when they perceived, as they did at last, that the theories with which they had been amused were less confidently advanced every day,—that the authors of them began to occupy less and less of the public eye,—to shrink away from observation,—at last to disappear altogether,—that, in dreadful earnest, those grim scrutineers, Famine and Death, were reviewing the specious syllogisms, and detecting their sophistry,—then, indeed, they awoke with exasperation from the magnetic sleep into which they had suffered themselves to be cajoled, and their cry was, "Vengeance on the authors of our miseries !" The charlatans were not to be discriminated from the government of the day ;

their accomplices were not to be distinguished from the mass of the better classes. The victims rose, therefore, against society, which dis severed itself from them,—against order, which doomed them to perish,—against a government which had seduced, and then deserted them.

Nor can the conquest obtained over them be boasted of even now as a triumph. It is the conquest of the river by the dam. Starvation swells the stream at this very moment. Animosity and crime are fed with blood. Four hundred thousand people are more destitute, more exasperated, and more familiarized with crime, than they were before the insurrection. The question for each will, in the end, come to this: “Shall I die silently in my garret, or manfully in the streets?”

Why have I digressed into these matters?

Because, in the speeches and writings of the popular leaders here I recognise the prologue of a drama, which, FOR THEM, if acted to the end, will have a yet more fatal catastrophe than the analogous tragedy of France.

A man incurs a tremendous responsibility when he promises anything to a nation. In proportion to the vastness of the interests concerned, is the risk incurred in the event of non-performance. The more brilliant the future that is pictured in the eloquence of the orator, the more dark the contrast will prove, if it be never, or be not immediately realized. For what have the new Repeal leaders, including Protestants

as well as Romanists, gone security to the people of Ireland? Is it merely for a fair field for their industry? Elbow-room to drudge with less molestation at their toil? Space and time to overtake the civilization of Europe? More, far more, than this. Recollect, the multitude will always take the language of promise literally, however metaphorically they may interpret prophecy. The great promise which concerns *them* is—*bread*. Bread is, in language borrowed from a higher source, the one thing needful. Bread to starving or half-fed millions; bread in sufficiency, and in peace; bread for work, perhaps; but, at all events, BREAD. To this promise everything else is subordinate. All the dignity of “nationhood” will signify nothing unless this pledge be redeemed. To be “great, glorious, and free,” people must have *bread to eat*.

Contemplate Ireland one month after a revolution at this period of the year. Four months after it, if the harvest be previously got in. What would be the aspect of her countenance, when all the ordinary expedients to support nature had failed, and the extraordinary ones of pillage and robbery were exhausted? On whom would she first turn her famished eye, when succour had ceased to be hoped for, and vengeance remained the only instinct possible to be gratified? If a timely flight had not forestalled the public yearning, there would, at least, be one appetite gratified—that of revenge—in tearing these sureties of plenty to pieces, and devouring



them as instalments of what they had promised to pay.

A more dangerous play was never played than to lure a populace in its extremity to acts of violence by hopes of a *material* nature, which may, by any possibility, prove delusive. The violence once committed dethrones self-respect ; it makes a people, as it makes a man, ill-humoured ; and the very uneasiness of the conscience will seek to quiet itself, by bringing to its bar the culprit who had originally seduced it to error.

It is time to return from my digression.

I can easily anticipate the feelings with which many well-meaning Irishmen will read my sketch of the government tactics, as hitherto pursued. They will reflect with indignation upon the despotic policy my strictures seem to countenance, and ask : “Is this a time of day, when you can dragoon a people into contentment and happiness, and when a lucky discovery in military science is proposed to silence the dissensions and settle the internal disputes of a great empire?”

Menenius were, indeed, a strange mediator of peace, if he sought to terminate the secession of the people by means of such sentiments. Lord Clarendon can now *act*. I have shown why. He *is* acting. I need not show how. You all know it. But unless he have *argument* in his favour, his acts will be in vain. Acts are of no real use except to carry out

arguments. Arguments must be at the bottom of the gun-barrel, or the recoil will be more dangerous than the discharge. In all that I have hitherto said I have assumed that he is in the right. Why have I made this assumption? Because the majority of the Council of the Empire has thought so and said so. The place where these matters are legitimately argued under the British Constitution, is in the Parliament of the United Empire; and there it has been held that it is expedient to repress the present ferment in Ireland with a strong hand. I have, therefore, a *primâ facie* case in my favour. It is not on my own authority I ask assent to the assumption: it has already the sanction of the Empire in its constitutional Council.

I must not forget, at the same time, what has been confidently advanced by the illuminated few across the channel who call themselves "Young England,"—that a state of things is approaching, in which the requirements of civilization will demand, or rather necessitate, a surrender of the old cumbrous device of oral debate; and that THE PRESS will, by its own power, in time supersede all deliberative machinery. Already, indeed, it seems to possess a telegraphic way to the mind; and old-fashioned Public Opinion, though it may fancy itself borne along with the velocity of an express, too often discovers that it has arrived behind time, and is hopelessly in the grasp of journalizing detectives.

Neither must I forget (though, somehow or other,

it directly contravenes certain other assumptions of the *illuminati* of the sister Isle) that political theorists have for more than half a century seemed to take it for granted that the natural tendency of governments is towards complete democracy ; so much so, that those who are most opposed to that form, as a question of expediency, leave the theory untouched, and content themselves with the endeavour to stave off as long as possible what they deem inevitable.

Now, as to the first topic, the destiny of the Press, I do not care to say much. I shall be criticised by the Press. It is judge and jury in its own case. Prudence dictates reserve. If the Press were simply the reflex of public opinion,—if it did not create, as often as it represents, the general mind, I might subscribe to the justice of Mr. D'Israeli's views respecting it. Concealment, I admit, is an evil. Let every thought be known,—every heart laid bare. Legislation can never work on perfect data until this consummation be reached. The statistics of opinion are the most valuable material the statesman could collect. But, unfortunately, the Press acts in two ways: in one sense it is an echo of the public voice,—in another it is itself an individual voice, seeking its echo from multitudes. It may, therefore, put forth individual opinions, instead of reflecting general ones. In point of fact it frequently does. And here it possesses an unfair advantage. One man's opinion may be worth no more than another's. But one man has the mighty speaking-trumpet at his command, which the other has not,



and his words go forth where those of the other can never reach. Nor will it ever be ascertained how far the legitimate objective function of the Press is superseded by the illegitimate subjective function, which gives to a single mind, by the diffusion of its ideas, an advantage more than commensurate with its actual value. Until these two functions can be separated, the anticipated "sovereignty of the Press" must be considered an equivocal blessing. *In practice*, the sovereignty of the minds which had possessed that advantage has *not* proved the golden age for France.

But, on the second point, I mean the discoverable tendency of governments towards the ideal of a democracy, I must make bold to differ more decidedly from the popular school of politics. I shall be the first to admit that slavery is an evil,—that the people must have a due share in their own government,—that the more liberty a nation can safely possess, the happier and more prosperous it is, and so forth. But I contend, first, that democracy is *not* the natural condition of society, no matter how civilized—or how barbarous—it may be ; that is, not the condition in which society first discovers itself, or into which, on being disturbed, it will settle, if left to its own influences: and I hold, secondly, that democracy being an artificial form of government, it is desirable that it should not contain within itself the elements of stability, but have—as it has—a tendency to lapse into one or other of the true forms.

If, however, the doctrine of THE SOVEREIGNTY OF

THE PEOPLE be sound, in fact or in principle,—that is, if it be true that they *are* sovereign, or right that they *should be so*, then democracy follows as a corollary; it is the terminus at which political society must ultimately arrive.

This was the watchword of the first French Revolution. This was the theme of the new philosophy of Europe. It was proclaimed with such a parade of authority, that to deny it was looked upon as not only folly, but treason; a treason which every one was concerned in exposing, because every one was born within the purple of the sovereignty in question, and had an interest in defending it.

Political theories have, however, of late been submitted repeatedly to the stubborn test of experiment. National cycles, formerly spread over generations, have been, in these days, compressed into a brief interval of time; and results which used to be the deductions of historic abstraction have now come within the range of individual observation.

From the experience of recent events, the world has *unlearned*—as well as learned—a great deal. It now sees that, in point of fact, “the people” are not omnipotent; and that, where they have been permitted to exercise the supreme power, they have proved unfit to use it, and unable to retain it; gravitating down from the surface by a natural process, and throwing up other governing influences, identical with, or analogous to, those ancient ones they had discarded.

The cause of these successive efforts and successive failures, was a false theory. The "People" never can be sovereign; and "Liberty" never can be complete. The laws of human nature, influencing communities as well as individuals, are against it. Providence has assigned bounds to man's sovereignty, as to man's liberty. The revealed laws of God have confirmed these pre-existing laws, and said that there must be limits to both. The point to aim at in national revolutions, as in national legislation, is a mean and not an extreme. As sure as you exceed the former, you will oscillate again through the whole arc to the very extreme you sought to escape from. France was taught this lesson in her first revolution, through a period which occupied about twenty years. She failed to derive wisdom from experience; and now the same cycle has been all but run in a few months! Can she—can the world—refuse any longer to square their philosophy by such stern inculcation?

I am well aware that to attempt now-a-days to deny the truth of the maxim that "the people is sovereign," is to set the whole world open-mouthed upon me,—not simply in a mass, but marshalled by great names,—mighty authorities, who have announced the glorious truth, and established it as an imperishable axiom in politics.

Well, all I have to say for myself is this—I hope I possess some common sense as well as another man. The doctrine, I suppose, is a fair subject for inquiry;



and not, like that of the Trinity, to be accepted with reverential faith. Moreover, it concerns myself and my country. I have, therefore, a right to inquire into it.

Accordingly, I will inquire into it; and if it be contrary to reason or revelation I will reject it, no matter what anathemas may be thundered against me. I know, moreover, that great names have before now kept up the credit of unsound arguments, to the great detriment of true knowledge. Every student is aware, that when Hume's apparently unanswerable scepticism came to be scrutinized by the Scotch philosophers, it was found to be based on certain theories of Locke, which had been received without question by Berkeley; and it was only by discovering the fallacy of Locke's reasoning which lay at the foundation, that they were able to overthrow Hume's infidel superstructure.

I feel, however, that such a subject cannot possibly be discussed as it ought to be, within the limits or according to the style this humble form of publication confines me to. I must, therefore, only say a few desultory words; which, indeed, may be the fewer, as I have one great ally on my side—EXPERIENCE; which has proved, first, that the people is a bad sovereign; and, secondly, that, except by permission, it is not sovereign at all. Nevertheless, as this fallacy, which is already beginning to be exposed in most of the councils of Europe, has found refuge in this country, and figures at the head of certain "articles

of faith," put forth by a newspaper which lately proclaimed itself the organ of Irish republicanism, I may look it in the face for a moment.

"After the will of God, the will of the people is almighty."

I come at once to definitions. What is "the people?"

Let me first gather the meaning of the term from these articles, throughout which it is evidently made identical with "the nation;" "The majority of a nation *is* the nation." Here it is explained: "The nation," and its synonym, "the people," mean the physical mass, or numerical preponderance of a community.

Such was the *Tribune's* idea of the "people;" a power which, it asserted, is to make its own government; which may enthrone and dethrone monarchs; which cannot commit treason; to act against which is treason; whose attribute is sovereignty; whose majesty is only reflected by that of the monarch; and of whom the monarch is but the first paid servant.

Very well. "After the will of God" the will of the numerical majority of "*the people*" is "almighty."

Before I return to the main definition, let me endeavour to understand the "article" itself. I presume that, by "*is almighty*" our new Ollamh Fodhla means "*ought to be almighty*;" for the positive assertion calls for proof, which is not so easy to be had. What does "after the will of God" mean?

Suppose it were the will of God that the “people” should not have their will, what then? How can a will be at once subordinate and almighty? Suppose that, as individuals have a wicked will sometimes, the people should have a wicked will too, *ought* this to be almighty? But, take a third supposition. It may mean, “provided God so will it, the will of the people should be almighty.” This is a truism. Under such circumstances, it not only should be, but must be almighty. Hence, we have not advanced a step. There is no “almightiness” at all in a “people,” however you may define that term; for you have, on the admission of this, the express organ of republicanism, FIRST to look to the will of God. I need not push the point farther; we all know what God’s will is as to human will. The simplest elements of Christianity teach this.

Now to return to the *Tribune’s* “people.” I like to startle the reader. I am not afraid of speaking truth, even in the language of paradox. Accordingly, I say that *there is no such class whatever in a social community, having a constitutional government, as “the people,” in the Tribune’s sense of the term.* It is the mere residuum, after every possible element of consideration has been extracted from it. It is the types in the case, as compared with the types in the form. It might so happen, that the *Tribune’s* “people”—that is, the majority—might prove, according to another classification, the true and legitimate sovereignty of the nation,—and happy is the nation so circum-



stanced ; but, from being the simple majority, it derives no sovereignty whatever.

To make myself better understood, I will lay down a few short principles, embodying some of my ideas relative to this subject :

1. In men there are two powers,—the physical and the mental. The former, or physical, is pretty nearly equal in equal masses, and increases directly as the mass ; whereas mental power varies in different individuals to such a degree, that the amount of mind in masses cannot be estimated by the number of individuals composing them ; added to which, moral power does not increase by multiplication, like physical. United minds act in a different way from united bodies on each other. The accession of a weaker physical power lends aid to the stronger, as far as its power extends ; whereas the admixture of weaker mental or moral power with the stronger, makes the combination weaker than the unaided strength of the stronger ; in other words, physical power is the sum of all its component parts,—mental or moral power the average of them.

2. Society has always existed in a state of inequality ; no tendency towards complete equality has as yet been indicated anywhere. The laws of the human constitution point to the necessity of this inequality. From any forced equalization a relapse will unavoidably ensue ; some parts will rise and some will sink ; and society will settle into two classes,—the strong and the weak,—the wise and the simple,—

the good and the bad,—the governing and the governed.

3. It is the object of all good men to temper this inequality, by preventing the governors from becoming despotic, and the governed from becoming servile.

4. Physical power is necessary, in a subordinate capacity, to carry out certain objects proposed by the mind; and must take a position exactly regulated by the amount of mind which influences it. It is the tool, the implement, or the weapon, in the hand of the mind, according as mechanical art, husbandry, or war, are the objects to which it is to be applied.

5. Where there is bodily work to be done, men are reckoned by polls. It is thus we count operatives, farm labourers, armies. It is only when muscle is to be employed that numbers represent strength.

6. The mind and feeling of a people are the true standards of its value. The constitution should be so framed that these should be always predominant.

7. But mind and feeling are not to be estimated by numbers.

8. Mind and feeling ought to be elevated by society, as they are by nature, to an importance irrespective of numerical calculation.

9. Under a free constitution, property is acquired by superiority of mind and feeling; social and political eminence is attained by the same means. The power of influencing others, existing by nature, is

secured by the same means. Our constitution confers all these privileges on mind and feeling.

10. Mind and feeling, thus elevated by nature, the laws of society, and our own constitution, will have their due influence in governing; but are not estimated by numbers.

11. The Nation, signifying an organized community, in which mind and feeling hold their true position, is, and ought to be, for political purposes, "almighty."

12. The Nation, in the sense of the physical majority, ought to be held in subjection, like any other brute force; and he who attributes power to the nation in this sense holds ideas not only treasonable in a constitutional sense, but incompatible with the existence of society.

13. The smallest degree of mental or moral superiority will, in the end, give property and influence.

14. The smallest degree of property and influence is sufficient, in a representative government such as our's, to give a man power beyond that of a unit in the population.

15. It is within the reach of every mind in our free community, to influence affairs in the exact proportion to its power.

16. Governments were originally despotic, and modelled on the patriarchal state. Family government is still despotic, and every individual has been, up to a certain period, amenable to it, either directly or under scholastic discipline.



17. The natural governments are monarchies and oligarchies. A democracy or a republic is an artificial state of society ; and if those who are elevated by mental superiority made a proper use of their power, would be probably unknown in the communities of mankind. It is the penalty which society has to pay for the violation of her own laws.

18. The abuses of the primitive forms of government have from time to time caused, *not* a recurrence to, but a violation of, first principles, called revolutions, and the establishment by general consent of artificial forms of government, in which the community itself shall have a direct and immediate part in the government of the whole, instead of an indirect and remote share, by representation and social position.

19. The want of unity in such governments generally renders them short-lived ; but, to have any life at all, they must recognise the principle of moral and intellectual superiority at the outset against the doctrine of numerical preponderance.

Such are a few plain, common-sense maxims, which may at all events serve to put in a clearer light the fallacy conveyed under the specious axiom, that “the people is sovereign.” In one sense it is plain that the people *is* sovereign ; but when the doctrine is put forth to justify the arming of an ignorant and deluded populace with pikes and pitchforks, against the whole moral and intellectual array of the com-

munity, a few words of refutation may be useful, if it be only to satisfy those who feel the truth like an intuition, though they cannot reduce it to terms.

God knows I ought not to be driven to this. To show that the eye pierces farther than the eye-lash reaches,—that the range of the human intellect exceeds that of the human arm,—and that such ought to be the case,—one might think a work of surplusage ; but these journalists have to talk down from their rostrums to very unlearned, very credulous, and very itching ears ; and it is astonishing what an advantage it gives them,—how much they can get their auditors to swallow and digest.

The French revolutionists of the last century never ventured to go these lengths. Even Rabaut, the most extreme of the republican theorists who did not break forth into actual madness, shrinks from such extravagance.

It is melancholy—must I say hopeless?—to reflect on such studious deception and such easy credulity, when there is no corrective medium between eloquent and high-flown absurdity on the one side, and absolute faith on the other ; no sound public opinion, no sturdy common sense, which, standing half-way, shall demand scrutiny on the part of those addressed, and some semblance of plausibility on the part of those addressing. What is to be done? Here, in this very creed, there is not only the gross deceit of first calling the physical majority of *Ireland* the Nation, and then attributing to a mass of pike-

men the majesty and the rights of natural sovereignty, but, what is more fearful to contemplate, the avowal of a persecuting and tyrannical code, under the name of liberty.

Yes, a persecuting and tyrannical code. The word "liberty" sounds very speciously all throughout. It runs from end to end like "the rogue's yarn" in the dock-yard cables ; but any one a whit wiser than the persons for whose enlightenment the document was drawn up, can see that a rigid and despotic system is contained within it, and constitutes its true spirit. What is political liberty? Is it the liberty to think *with* the "nation," to serve it, to praise it, to assist it, to live for it, to die for it? Why, under the Autocrat, or the Sultan, one may do that. Liberty is a condition of general toleration,—of concession to dissent,—of forbearance towards minorities,—of universal permission, in fact, except where the general interest necessitates restriction. Is *this* what breathes through the "tribunitial" code? Why, half of it is a definition of "treason," the highest crime which can be committed against a State ; and it is made to extend to almost every act, word, and thought which does not chime in with the exact spirit and policy of "*The Tribune*" itself : and, moreover, for our comfort, already includes in its scope every one of us, who are not rebels in heart and conspirators in act. Bright prospects for the defeated party in the new republic, to be judged by this benign code !

Just take a few of the articles in question. I have



shown that the physical majority of Ireland is held to be “the nation.” Well.

“A nation cannot commit treason.” Hence, if the peasantry in the country, and the operatives in the city, no matter under what circumstances, think proper to rise, massacre the better classes, and seize the reins of Government, they have not committed “treason.” But it goes on: “To oppose by force the expressed will of the nation is treason.” Recollect, —the Jacquerie have burst into the Castle, and hoisted the green—or, more probably, *black*—flag on its towers; and then the article runs, that if we attempt to oppose the insurgents, who have thus “expressed” their “will” tolerably plainly, we have committed “treason”!

Yet observe how all this sophistry must break out into absurdity at last.

“To use the regular army for the purpose of intimidating or crushing the will of the nation is treason.” Here it is first assumed that there *is* a nation, —that is, a classified community, for otherwise it is only a population—then, that the will of the majority is the will of the nation; and then, that that will is *absolutely* almighty, omitting the exception originally made in favour of the will of God. All this has to be assumed before the framer of the code can make his point good; which is nothing less than this, that if the lowest classes appeal to physical force, no matter how criminally (as, for instance, where they seek to visit the consequences of a natural calamity

on society in general), the moral and intellectual force, if it fall back upon those defences which the prudence of the Legislature has organized against this very danger, whether from domestic or foreign sources, commits "treason!"

I need not go farther. Such utter disregard of all reasoning,—such violation of the simplest maxims,—such repudiation of the commonest axioms,—such dogged rejection of self-evident propositions,—such bold arraignment of intuitive truths,—baffle and confound refutation. In their numerical amount, as well as in their value, they resemble the "physical force" principle itself. It ceases to be an argument; it becomes a struggle.

And can all this go down in Ireland?—A country whose population seems naturally unable to comprehend so much as the meaning of a republic?—where all the memories and associations of the peasantry are patriarchal?—amongst whom the relation of clan-ship is the only one harmonious with their principles and dear to their hearts?—who worship the man descended from the man their fathers followed?—would not such a people prefer even despotism to shivering in the uncongenial liberty of such a constitution? But,—oh, wonder!—we have lived to see the day when newspapers, seeking and finding sympathy amongst the populace, actually dare to sneer at the religion which every one supposed was the deepest-rooted principle at the bottom of their hearts. There is scarcely a number of these journals in which the

Roman Catholic religion is not openly ridiculed, the very name made a by-word, and held sufficient to point the dullest jest against an enemy.

It may be said that, in directing my remarks against republicanism, I take a course inconsistent with my original assumption, that the current of events in this country, in case of a successful insurrection, sets towards a Roman Catholic despotism.

I had, however, a reason for choosing this course, though I still adhere to my speculative surmise. The acts and the arguments of republicanism are open and avowed; what the party dares to do, it dares to justify. Hence, their words and their doings can be met; which is what the tenets and designs of the "Old Ireland" party never could, and never can. And, again; it is the republican party who are now the active party. The *immediate* danger is from them. The other is holding back till the time shall come when it can safely seize upon the spoil already wrested from the common enemy.

I therefore deem it right to blow republicanism down by argument, if I can, as I would force an out-work, though it possessed me of nothing, before I stormed the body of the place.

Whether an intellectual cannonade will have the effect of demolishing the material defences of disaffection, is more than I can say. I fear not. But I would expend much ammunition in the attempt; for I feel that, after all, argument is the only true and sure



way of settling domestic differences. Of course, when there is an aggressive movement, it must be repelled by force; but still the argument remains open. And it is the conviction that my fellow-countrymen,—the mass of the people,—have been foully used by those who constitute themselves their brains'-carriers;—that, even taking it for granted that their general principles and general assumptions are right, these agitators have banished truth and candour utterly and openly from their speeches and writings, taking advantage of every possible opportunity to misrepresent, traduce, malign, and distort the characters, actions, and arguments of their opponents; that they have cast behind them the acknowledged code of philosophic morality, as they have contemptuously rejected the sublime precepts of Christianity; that they recklessly seek to plunge this great country into the horrors of war, against all the deductions of wisdom as to its necessity, without a more defined object for the future than uprooting what *is*, in the hope of securing what may be better; that, instead of following the example of the great Washington and other illustrious revolutionists, and endeavouring by the tone of their writings and of their words to elevate the minds of the masses they swayed above the control of the brute passions, they have studiously sought to render the struggle they invite as sanguinary and as deadly as possible, goading every malignant instinct to desperation, and lashing honest discontent into remorseless frenzy;—it is, I say, the conviction that,

in so doing, the new school of revolt is using my fellow-countrymen foully, that urges me forward at this time of danger and perplexity, and induces me to court the obliquy of opposition, without the solace of friendly approbation, instead of doing what I might do with so much more safety and ease, and preserving a neutrality, against which the charge of inconsistency, at least, could never be urged.

I love my fellow-countryman—the Irish peasant—in my heart. I not only love him because he is my countryman, but because I see in him qualities to be loved. I love him because he is unfortunate, and has borne unexampled privations with unexampled patience. I love him because he is placed at a disadvantage. Appearances are against him. He is mixed up, in the mind of almost every body who has not extensive intercourse with his class, with ideas of Ribbonism and ruffianism, with blind resistance to authority, and dark deeds of blood. But men who see deeper, or who have taken the trouble of examining carefully and extensively for themselves, well know how much of this springs from a false and pernicious state of things, which it is not in the power of the individuals who are its victims to escape from, and which never will be completely got rid of until those to whom they look up for advice and guidance,—be they clergy or laity,—set themselves to the work of reformation in earnest.

In this respect, the latter years of the life of O'Connell might have been redeeming years. In the track

of the apostle of temperance, he preached order, morality, self-respect. Had he done so as a *primary*, and not a *secondary* object, we should not have the spectacle of the very same population who, a few short years ago, drank in his words as if indeed they were the revelation of a new Gospel, now breathing hatred and massacre, armed with deadly weapons of new and appalling forms, ready to rise up at the bidding of men who utter the suggestions of demons in the language of blasphemy, and trample under foot all those doctrines of morality, order, and self-respect, which had been so repeatedly and apparently so effectually inculcated upon them.

I love the peasantry, because I think it is through their good qualities that they are betrayed. They are a simple, confiding race, blindly submissive to those they trust ; and they never could be won to outrage but by tampering with their affections. They have been ground in the wine-press of famine,—crushed out of all heart and hope ; and, as they are recovering from a state of exhaustion, under which thousands of their friends and neighbours have sunk, they are told—in words of burning strength—that the English have done it all ; and that their wives and families will continue to starve, if this horde of foreigners, heretics, and exterminators are allowed to remain in the country any longer. If a man do not prove wise enough to resist this, is he to be blamed for it ?

It is, indeed, a pitiable sight to see the generous



and toiling peasant in his furrow, striving to handle his plough in peace and contentment, and bear with cheerfulness the lot of labour which he knows in his conscience is imposed upon him rather by the will of God than the injustice of man; but goaded by the whispers of malignity reaching him from these journals, and teasing him, like the attack of some venomous insect, too minute for his rough strength to annihilate, too subtle for his awkward ingenuity to shake off!—these whispers buzzing about him, until they seem to become at last a sort of echo of his own thoughts, which indeed they are, but of those thoughts which he had always recognised as his worst thoughts, representing principles and passions which he felt should be discouraged in his breast, and which he had till then succeeded in keeping in subjection.

Imagine such a man, in fatigue and vexation of spirit, having fruitlessly endeavoured to get rid of the tormentor, at last casting by the implements of his husbandry, and repairing to the altar of his God, there to seek for comfort and for justification from the counsel which should echo and corroborate the still small voice of his own conscience;—and there—*even there*—finding the torment renewed, the flame fed, by the fuel of political harangues—the sting of individual denunciations!

The trials, I presume, will go forward. If I refrained on a former occasion from saying a word

which might wound any party interested for the gambler whose “game was up,” it is not likely that I should now attempt to prejudge cases yet pending, or influence the public mind in anything personal to the parties. Indeed so keenly do I feel the delicacy of my position in this respect, that some explanations I had intended to have made referring to certain misstatements of my arguments respecting the constitution of juries, I shall omit altogether; preferring even to be misrepresented, to affording grounds for any complaint on this score. I cheerfully forego all advantages which this opportunity would have presented to myself in a personal matter, for the sake of urging the vindication of my country, without the imputation of interested motives. For I do hold that, in the eyes of Europe, she, too, is on her trial:—she is mixed up with the prisoners’ case:—she is included in the charge against them. It is to resist this flagrant injustice, and detach Irishmen from participation in the acts, sayings, writings, and feelings which have led to the arraignment of these men at the bar of justice,—to exhibit them as the victims of an organized and tyrannical system, which, by moral and physical violence, deprives them of their free will, and places them as helpless recusants, with weapons in their reluctant hands, to incur all the danger, obloquy, and disgrace of treason, without the delirious support of a drugged and drammed conscience;—it is to prove an *alibi* of my country’s heart, by witnessing to its presence in the paths of virtue, in

the marts of industry, in the valleys of peace, in the temples of God;—it is to draw away from about the persons of the real culprits the multitudes who might serve to screen the outlines of their individuality, and countenance the anomaly of their position;—it is to leave these face to face with the laws of their country, and conduct those in honour and security to the shelter of their homes:—it is for such purposes I write. Every lawyer knows the vulgar cant of a criminal court;—how it is a recognised trick of the prisoner's counsel to represent his client as the object of persecution by an organized conspiracy representing the Crown, and headed by the Crown Prosecutor;—a course so well understood and invariably acted on, that the advocate who is made in one case, by the simple administration of a fee, a participator in this nefarious conspiracy, urges without a blush, in the next, the very charge which, had it any real meaning, would have hopelessly criminated himself. This is part of the stock-machinery in courts of justice, and passes at its true value; but as cases rise in importance, and will be scrutinized more keenly by a wider circle, the common expedients of the advocate are subtilized and refined by his genius, expanding with circumstances, so as to be far less easily seen through. Coloured by the eloquence of the orator, the whole proceeding presents the aspect of persecution on the one hand, and martyrdom on the other. The Crown concentrates its tremendous powers in one arm,—that of the Attorney-General.



It clothes him in a panoply of offensive and defensive armour, and, from the mere love of tyranny, launches him, battle-axe in hand, like some giant of romance, against the persons of one or two unfortunate individuals, whose cause, probably, some chivalrous barrister takes up with disinterested warmth, from the absolute impossibility of resisting the impulse of his feelings. This would be all very well, if it was set to the account of ordinary rhetoric, to be as such admired—and dismissed. But experience has shown on a late occasion, how easily intelligence itself is entrapped by the hackneyed stratagem. On that occasion the strong exigencies of an imperilled country were narrowed into the vindictive malignity of a salaried officer. The powers with which the Constitution has invested an honourable functionary for the discharge of duties indispensable to the maintenance of public order, and as arduous as they are important, were converted into chains of tyranny or instruments of torture; and all that represents principle, system, ethics, and Christianity, in the organization of legal machinery, was industriously construed into the reckless exercise of power under the influence of passion. A client—one helpless individual—appeared on one side: a grim array of authorities, of judges, counsel, police, gaolers, indiscriminately massed on the other. What an unequal force!—what a gratuitous onslaught!—what an apparatus of extermination! Let the Attorney-General abandon his prosecution,—what injury is done to *him*?—

What? And has the Attorney-General then no clients? Is he placed there to badger, to bully, and bait the prisoner for his own amusement? Is there no one but himself interested in the issue of the trial? Are there no fainting hearts, no feeble knees, tremblingly awaiting the issue of the strife? Oh, what an array do the Attorney-General's clients present in such a case! To think of them might well inspire dulness itself with eloquence, and tinge the coldest technicalities with the glowing colours of the heart. True, the prisoner also has many friends and supporters, who wish him well; they are the high hearts and strong arms of the community,—men ready to do and dare, eager for action, impatient to rush on danger, with the steel of strife gleaming from under the vesture of peace. But, oh! what a different aspect does the assembled group bear, whose cause the law officer of the Crown pleads, in asking justice against the promoters of insurrection! Amongst its members, it is true, there is, thank God, many a brave spirit and powerful arm,—not the less brave because it quails at the thoughts of civil bloodshed; not the less powerful because it is exercised in the arts of industry, or the labours of the field, instead of the evolutions of brigand discipline. But the group is made up of other constituents. The pious, and the patient, and the peaceful,—the true philosopher, and the true Christian, are there. The humble in heart as well as in position; the philanthropist, who carries his love to

man forth into life, and acts up to the lofty designation he bears ; the patriot, who sees in his country not a shapeless aggregate of incoherent units, but a society bound together by equitable laws, systematized by political, social, and moral organization, dignified by liberal and enlightened institutions, and ennobled by magnanimity, virtue, and Christianity,—such are among them. There, too, may be seen the manly labourer in each of the various fields of human cultivation ; from the glebe which is so without a metaphor, to that which can only be designated as such in its most exalted and sublime sense,—science, literature, poetry :—the student, who scorns the idea of attempting to control masses of his fellow-men before he has learned to know himself, and toiled up the ascent which is the only legitimate way to true eminence. There, less prominently seen, stand the helpless and hapless families of the half-implicated peasant,—the terrified children, the miserable parents, the distracted wife,—whose agony concentrates in a single groan the full power of that language which the genius and fluency of the advocate can only imperfectly embody in words,—which eloquence itself can but paint at second hand: there they are, mutely pleading in the person of one legal functionary. Yes,—and more than these. The fair speculator, whose honest calculations have failed him, and left him to ruin, in the darkness of a crisis which baffled all anticipation ; the beggared artist, with the elaborate creations of



his chisel or pencil thrust aside in scorn or indifference in the ferocity of epidemic excitement; the versatile genius, who combines the triumphs of art with those of archæology and literature, and wears excellence in all with the amiable and most diffident bearing of a true philosopher, yet whose gentle pursuits, although they must confer immortal fame upon him hereafter, are, in the rage and roar of the strife, unable to make their modest claim for present support heard or recognised:—such, too, are amongst the clients of the Attorney-General. But it is the fashion to say, and of late the custom to believe, that the “right honourable gentleman” is a Goliath, stalking forth from the ranks of the Philistines in harness of brass to defy the armies of Israel, and make each innocent stripling who takes up a stone out of the brook, food for the fowls of the air.

What is the Attorney-General to me? He may reject my support with indignation if he be a rigid member of his Church. Were he superseded to-morrow, it is not the man I would follow, but his successor. I defend the Attorney-General *as such*, and because he has a great trust committed to him, in which *I* am concerned.

The question of Repeal, at all events, is dead. That is a fact no longer to be controverted. You may separate the countries altogether, but you cannot now cut asunder the parliamentary cable, and hope that Ireland will ride out the storm by the

painter of monarchy. Repeal is defunct—extinct. It has been despatched by as many wounds as Cæsar, and by as many parties. It has had its throat cut, its back broken, its neck twisted—let me add, its pockets rifled. It has a pike in its heart, and a bullet in its brain. It would indeed have been buried long ago, but that a society of gentlemen in this city have retained it above ground for some purposes of their own, not very easy to be fathomed, it is true, but apparently of the last importance, judging from the earnestness of their proceedings. Who that has witnessed it, indeed, can forget the spectacle exhibited from time to time within their theatre, when the mangled body of REPEAL has been produced upon the table, and submitted to a species of galvanizing process, which conferred a grotesque vitality on the few sinews left unlacerated, setting the eyes rolling, the teeth chattering, and convulsing the limbs into a sort of ghastly caricature of a dance? Around the unconscious automaton the PROTESTANT REPEALERS gather, enjoying the exhibition, remarking upon the performer's evident health, his mighty muscularity, his intellectual expression of countenance, his exquisite proportions; and ready, one and all, to insert the creature's name in the lease of their national prospects and hopes; while the assassins themselves, admitted to the entertainment, grin over their shoulders!

Repeal is dead,—and a mighty and terrible ghost haunts its home. But I believe in my soul, that if

the image is vast it is unsubstantial; and that, if it assumes the attitude of menace now in the gloomy night-time of European convulsion, it will retire into obscurity before the return of the same blessed light which drives beasts of prey to their dens, and invites man forth to his labour.

I believe, moreover, that if Repeal had not been dead *as an argument*, been seen through, exposed, and detected, the ghost of dismemberment would never have walked the earth. Every year the absurdity of the Repeal question was forcing itself more and more resistlessly on the conviction of the reflective portion of the community; and exactly in the same proportion did the machinations of the separatists unfold themselves. According as the argument grew weaker, the menace of force became more open. If the argument had been a sound and tenable one, in a constitution such as our's, it *must* have gained ground. It was thus that Emancipation, Reform, and other great measures, worked their way into the public conviction; and it is only by endeavouring to make out that England has, for some unknown reason, not alone a *personal disregard*, but a *personal antipathy* to us, that the advocates of the measure can account for its continued rejection.

I believe I have tired my friends by this time. Menenius Agrippa, though acknowledged by the citizens of Rome to be "worthy Menenius, one that hath always loved the people," was long-winded



enough. Nevertheless, he must, seizing this opportunity, say a word for himself.

He has been misrepresented as to his statements. But, under existing circumstances, and as they principally affect himself, he will, as he said, pass that over.

He has been, however, misrepresented as to his relations, and the capacity in which he appears before his countrymen. It has been said that he is an agent of the Government,—nay, that he *is* the Government! Now, it so happens, that if there be any curiosity to peep behind the mask of his incognito, it is exhibited, he is credibly informed, by members or attachés of the Government itself, who have, he presumes, no notion that they should be defended only just so far as it serves his argument, and superciliously overlooked on their own account. This it is due to himself—and them—to mention. If it could be believed that, with the opinions he has avowed, he could afford his countenance—or even *mask*—to a party which for years submitted to be held in office by the permission of a man who was to keep Ireland quiet for them,—whose principles and conduct they secretly condemned, and who openly expressed his contempt of them and their measures,—a man, whose life-long machinations have produced the present disastrous state of things in this country, and whose career should ever be taken in connexion with them;—to a party which, instead of grasping “Repeal” by the throat at the first as a felon and a traitor, suffered it to prowl

about the purlieus of the Constitution until the gang was mustered, and the burglary planned ;—to men who, in order first to gain a little popularity, and then to preserve a show of consistency, suffered Ireland to re-arm herself, for purposes avowedly unconstitutional ;—to a ministry who laud and magnify the body of ecclesiastics, the principles and conduct of which he has here, as at the first, so freely scrutinized ;—if, he repeats, this can be believed, he has certainly failed to impress the public as he wished, as far as his personal character is concerned.

But there are higher considerations than party ones. Certain acts are just and necessary, emanating no matter from whom. Certain men are noble and of an unimpeachable integrity, no matter in whose ranks they are found.

The present policy respecting Ireland is right beyond question ; and Lord Clarendon has earned the respect and good-will of this country during a crisis of unexampled importance. The time is not come when his policy can be seen in its true light. In the struggle of the conflict few can understand all that has been dared, and all that has been refrained from. But a day will arrive,—it is the hope and belief of Menenius that it will,—when Ireland, prosperous, peaceful, and happy, at length finally and for ever fused into the mass of Great Britain, shall look back at this, her last and most deadly struggle for separation, and admit with gratitude that to ONE MAN, under God, was due the result which placed

her where she might fulfil her true destiny, as a constituent part of the empire marked out by Nature within the circuit of the British Isles.

I am once more a pamphleteer. It became necessary in these few pages to go into theories more than I could have wished. If this little tract prove "in time" to help, by its tiny "stitch," to hold the robe of empire together, I may, perhaps, by and by, say a word in my own plain way on more practical matters.

THE END.



## MENENIUS TO THE PEOPLE.

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FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN!—You have long been listening to men who said they would do you good. I ask you—*have* they done so?

Now I want you to listen to *me*. Nobody knows who I am. I choose to remain unknown. If I speak sense, I know you will for your own sakes attend to what I say, no matter who I may be,—for it is about your concerns that I write.

Recollect, I intend these words for the lower classes. I have already written some pamphlets addressed to the middle classes, although you have probably never heard of them. In the opinions I put forward in them, some Irishmen have agreed with me, and some have disagreed with me. Now I want to see whether I cannot write something, in which I shall have nearly every honest Irishman on my side.

The reason I address you in particular is, because I think that at this moment it is in your power, quite as much as in that of any other class, to pro-

mote the interests of our country. But what I write may, I think, be read by persons above your class.

You now see that WAR is out of the question. If you seek to disturb the public peace, you will either have a musket-ball lodged in your body, or be yourselves lodged in the body of a jail—a disagreeable alternative. Whether it be right or wrong that you should be thus coerced,—whether you be used ill or well,—is nothing to the matter. There exists in every state such a thing as POWER, vested, rightfully or wrongfully, somewhere or other; and the Government of this country, the visible representative of power, commands peace, and will enforce it.

You must, therefore, be quiet at your peril.

It is because it is come to this that I now ask a hearing. I take it for granted that you have laid down your arms, if you had ever taken them up; and look round, asking,—what's to be done next?

Let me tell you here at the outset, that I have a way of speaking of my own. I am determined, for your sakes, to avoid the high and poetical style of those men—and they were clever men too—who brought you into your present condition. I have my own reasons for this, which I hope you will understand before I have done. But I want also to avoid addressing you as a schoolmaster does a row of simple boys, or a father a group of gaping children. I do not want to make a sermon of these pages, or to assume an air of superior wisdom, lowering its style so as to make itself understood by ignorance and

stupidity. I know right well who are listening to me. I know that you are humble in degree, and, many of you, unlearned enough. But I know, too, that you are men, and Irishmen ; and I will not insult you by supposing that you are fools, because I take upon me to advise you. I speak to you as man to men,—openly, freely, earnestly, cordially ; anxious to do you good if I can, and to deserve your goodwill for my good intention, whether I can or not.

One thing we must all feel the happier for,—that peace and security have for the present been restored to our unhappy land with so little expenditure of blood. I do not think there is a man among you who, if left to himself, would wish to see it otherwise. But no one, I am sure, three months ago, would have believed a prophet, if he had predicted that things would have turned out thus. How Ireland should pass from open, armed preparation on both sides, to a general state of comparative tranquillity, without going through the intermediate stage of carnage,—how we should cross the *Red Sea* without wetting the sole of our foot,—would have been a problem that no man alive could have resolved.

Providence has brought the miracle to pass, however : and our gratitude is justly due to Him who has divided the waters, and opened a future of hope to us once again, without marking the past in our memories by scenes not to be blotted out.

There has been a great deal to harass, mislead, and



exasperate you. The man must be a fool, or a brute, who does not admit that. You have been schooled from your cradle, by parents and teachers, to believe yourselves wronged. You saw yourselves behind the greater part of Europe in prosperity and civilization, which was humiliating ; but you saw yourselves in these particulars behind the greater part of the empire in which you lived, which seemed unjust, and was therefore galling to you. Wise men told you that it *was* unjust that you should be behind England in these respects, and that you had a right to be angry. They said, moreover, that it was an indifferent Parliament and a hostile Government that occasioned this ; and that the way to overtake the world, and rival England, was to obtain a Parliament for yourselves. You, of course, believed them, because they undertook that you should be one of the greatest and richest nations for your size in the world, if you could only manage to gain your point.

Perhaps they were quite right in what they told you. I am not going to dispute with them. All I say is, that you thought they were right, and thought you had yourselves a right to be angry, when you found that the Imperial Parliament would not listen to them, as you did.

But though you were occasionally discontented enough, there was nothing the matter which a little judicious exercise of concession on the one hand, and restraint on the other, could not set right ; and accordingly, in spite of the demonstrations of 1844,

things looked on the whole encouragingly for the country up to the year 1846. Then, indeed, a calamity occurred, which reached its highest pitch in 1847, and which threatened to plunge the country into utter ruin,—a calamity arising immediately from natural causes, though we cannot tell how they operated, but ultimately referable to the mysterious and inscrutable dispensation of God. None of you pretend to believe that *man* had a hand in the famine; though many of you may recollect that some of the Journals which circulated amongst you actually went the length of insinuating something of the kind.

An immense sum of money was instantly required to relieve distress, and save life. The landlords, representing property of which they only enjoyed an inconsiderable portion, and already rated for your support according to the full value of what they represented, were themselves rather the objects of charity than the sources from which relief could be derived. Now see how British connexion stood you in stead. A sum of ten millions was considered necessary to be raised. Where was such an amount to be found in Ireland? You must bear it in mind, that our commercial credit, never very firm, was then in its lowest state of depression, owing to the embarrassment and bankruptcy which had followed upon the over-speculation in railways and other schemes of the few previous years; and which told with particular severity upon Ireland, where we are in the habit of carrying on business with a smaller capital than is usual

in other countries. We actually had it not. We must either have determined on robbing some people of all they possessed, and reducing them to beggary and starvation, in order to support the rest, or have allowed nine-tenths of the poor peasantry in the distressed districts to die without assistance

But, fortunately for Ireland, the Articles of the Union were in force, and we had a right to our proportion of British aid. Ten millions, as I have said, were considered necessary for the purpose ; and Parliament agreed that, of that ten millions, more than nine must come from Great Britain ; that is, that she should supply *more* than her contingent. We had, therefore, here in Ireland, relief actually afforded to the amount of ten millions, at an expense to ourselves of less than one million. If this be not a substantial proof of the value of British connexion, I do not know what is.

I am almost ashamed of being obliged to remind my countrymen of a *benefit*. I thought gratitude was the virtue they loved to be distinguished by. Have you forgotten what was *given* to you, as well as what was voted and advanced ? History does not present anything to equal it. The amount separately contributed through the British Association, and under the Queen's letter, for Irish distress, was no less than £362,320. The General Central Relief Committee in Dublin received upwards of £50,000, principally from English sources. The Quakers contributed, in all, the enormous sum of £168,000. Charitable la-



dies collected £11,465 ; and the freight and charges alone which Government had to pay on supplies of food and clothing by benevolent individuals and societies, principally English, amounted to more than £50,000 !—and these are only a few of the most remarkable items !

But, all this time, what *you* were feeling was *hunger*. The discontent that had been fostered for years, seemed at length to be justified. You looked round you on rotting crops and blackening fields. If you had prided yourself on an humble but manly independence, it now cut you to the quick to find yourself obliged to accept your rations like degraded paupers, in whom shame has disappeared with self-respect. Your feelings might have been allowed for, —even excused ; they ought never to have been *tampered with*.

But they were. All that genius and ingenuity could devise to encourage and deepen the exasperation you felt, was put in practice upon you. In your misery and debasement you were exhorted—not to resignation, as under a judgment of heaven, but to revenge, as under an outrage of man. You were taught to be ashamed of those virtues in yourselves which would have dignified if they could not alleviate your miseries, and to spurn the outstretched hand of the generous people who pressed forward to minister to your necessities. This error of the heart you were schooled into,—an error which Irishmen ought instinctively to have seen through and

recoiled from ;—and besides, you were argued into an error of the head. You ought to have been wise enough to see that you had no special reason to be incensed at British connexion, at the very moment when that connexion had gained you a clear nine millions towards the relief of your destitution ; and moreover, that no human being was to blame because a population which lived on the potato found itself without food when that root failed. I add this last error, because I cannot help thinking that you were more angry at being obliged to accept as charity what kept you alive, than if you had been left to die ; so much easier is it to bear distress itself than humiliation.

You ought to have been able to see through these advisers of your's before they got you into difficulty and danger. I will tell you why. Because they tried to gain their objects *by making you bad men*. They laboured to instil the worst principles and rouse the worst passions of your nature. They sought to make you look upon misfortunes as wounds, and deaths as murders. They called resignation cowardice, and revenge courage. They sneered at your religion, whether it was Catholic or Protestant ; reviled you for your virtues, and threatened to make even your neutrality unsafe. They taught you to look upon property as plunder, and upon the upper classes as your prey. All the bonds of society it was their avowed object to loose ; and their mission they would have considered unfulfilled, until they had

sent you forth into the world, brutalized, with your hand against every man, and every man's hand against you.

I say, you ought to have seen through these men. I am going to give you a further reason, though you will not, perhaps, be so ready to accept it as a good one. It is, *because they flattered you*. Now, although you allowed yourselves practically to be played upon, I believe you have good sense enough to admit the truth of the maxim, that you should always suspect the man who praises you to your face. Such a man, in nine cases out of ten, is trying to take you in. If you hear a fellow in the market, who has anything to sell, telling you that you are the best judge of a purchase in the world, you may be certain he wants to cheat you. Any of you who have sat in a jury-box may remember that when the lawyer had a bad case, and wanted a verdict for his client, he told you that you were the most upright and honest men upon the face of the earth. And so it is all the world over. The practice is so well known that there is a name for it. It is termed *cajolery*. The English familiarly call it *humbug*. We have more than one word to express it in Irish.

This is precisely the plan your late leaders adopted with you. For twenty years you have been told that you are the finest peasantry in the world ; that the sun never lighted on so noble, generous, and powerful a population ; that your virtues in peace are only equalled by your bravery in war ; and that no bles-



sings which the bounty of fortune could lavish upon you, could overpay your deserts.

It is not because I want to deny all this, or any of it, that I point to it; but because the circumstance of its being so eternally rung in your ears *argued design*, and ought to have begotten suspicion. That cunning old monarch, Louis Philippe, never heaped such an excess of affectionate flattery upon our beloved Queen, as when he was employed in managing a piece of business of his own in Spain, which he suspected would annoy Her Majesty very much, and the knowledge of which he wanted to keep from her as long as possible. Your leaders flattered you, in order to blind you; and they sought to blind you, because they wanted you to do mischief to yourselves and others: thus offering a tribute to your virtue at the expense of your sagacity. Every day the double process was going forward. In proportion as they conceived they had sapped your social virtues, did they cry up your national importance. According as they calculated on having rendered you individually criminal, they preached the gospel of your power; and not till they believed they had carried the work of personal debasement to its utmost, did they announce the final doctrine, that the mass they had thus, as they thought, reduced below the level of humanity, constituted the lawful and absolute sovereignty of the nation.

In one of my former pamphlets I put before reflecting men, in a number of distinct propositions,

what I conceive to be the true nature, source, and end of sovereignty and liberty. I think a very few words might make the thing tolerably clear to anybody's understanding. It is plain that sovereignty and liberty cannot exist together: if either be complete, the other must be wholly absent. They can only be combined when they are both of them limited. Whether it be a king, or a council, or a people that be sovereign, in all these cases no member of the community can be absolutely free. And, on the other hand, if a man be in a state of perfect liberty, there can be no sovereignty anywhere else, even in the people of which he is a member. No man in a community can be perfectly free, without every one about him being a slave. For suppose there be an hundred men, and they assume complete sovereignty, it is plain that each one of them can only possess the one-hundredth part of that sovereignty, and in the other ninety-nine hundredths he must have no free will at all. Just as when an hundred forces act upon one body, they drive it, not in the direction of any one individual force among the hundred, but in a direction resulting from all the individual forces combined.

The doctrine of complete liberty, then, is a silly absurdity, which can deceive no one but the savage or the fool. We are every one of us, high and low, rich and poor, from the sovereign at the head to the beggar at the foot of the scale, in a state of social relationship, in which our powers on the one hand are

ever balanced by our duties on the other; and we gravitate towards each other, as astronomers know the heavenly bodies do, in a degree proportioned to our weight in the social system. What I want to show you is, that no change, gradual or violent, could get us out of this influence. Let us remain a monarchy, or become a republic, as individuals we must still be only free in a fractional degree; the main body of society, whatever you may please to call it, the masses, the million, THE PEOPLE, must, by the very constitution of society itself, independently of any arbitrary or political arrangement, be in a state of subjection.

The moment you have this explained, you can understand what I have no doubt has puzzled you—how it is that men of your own class in France, after all their revolutions, and in America, after their first and final one, have not a whit more influence in their respective countries than you have in your's. They talk very big about “liberty,” to be sure; they wear cockades in their hats, and sing songs through the streets in its praise. But they are still the hardest worked, the worst paid, the poorest fed portion of the community, which you may be perfectly certain they would not be contented to remain, if they were indeed the sovereign power.

I will tell you where sovereignty *does* exist. It exists, as the life does in the body, in the State *taken as a whole*, as one organized and working community, having its parts distinct, but united, and all acting in har-



monious relation one with the other. And I will also tell you that the arrangements of our Constitution have been framed much more advantageously *for your liberty*, than any which your leaders have dreamt of devising. You have often heard of the great American patriot, Washington. Now, Washington once said, that means such as you have been lately adopting for obtaining your purposes are extremely dangerous to liberty, because they tend to take power from the delegates of the nation at large, and throw it into the hands of a few ambitious men, who in all probability will, or at all events may in the end, use it against those who have conferred it on them.

A great number of you do not know why I call myself Menenius. I will tell you. The individual who actually bore the name, and who had a second name, Agrippa, was a citizen of Rome, at a time when the government of that country was republican. The people had got it into their heads, as you lately did, that they were sovereign in an absolute sense ; and, stung by some real and some fancied grievances, separated themselves altogether from the higher orders, and quitted their native city. After many attempts on the part of the nobles to win them back to their senses and their homes, Menenius, who was himself of plebeian—or humble—extraction, undertook to reason with them ;—but instead of making a set speech, he related to them a fable.

I will give it to you in the words of our illustrious countryman, Oliver Goldsmith, who has rendered it from the original Latin.

“In times of old, when every part of the body could think for itself, and each had a separate will of its own, they all, with common consent, resolved to revolt against the belly ; they knew no reason, they said, why they should toil from morning till night in its service, while the belly, in the mean time, lay at its ease in the midst of them all, and indolently grew fat upon their labours. Accordingly, one and all, they agreed to defend it no more. The feet vowed they would carry it no longer ; the hands vowed they would feed it no longer ; and the teeth averred they would not chew a morsel of meat, though it were placed between them. Thus resolved, they all for some time showed their spirit, and kept their word ; but soon they found that, instead of mortifying the belly by these means, they only undid themselves. They languished for a while, and perceived, when too late, that it was owing to the belly that they had strength to work, or courage to mutiny.”

Menenius knew his men, and gained his point. Though virtually slaves, the Romans returned to their homes and duty. I think the fable would apply with far more justice to you, who are free ; and it is because most of the arguments I have used, and intend to use, are included more or less completely in its scope, that I originally pitched upon the name of its inventor.

You see my idea is (and I believe you will find that most sensible men who have studied the subject, and speak impartially, without any object of their own to gain by it, agree with me), that our Constitution is not a system in which there is one class, or set, or party governing, and all the rest governed ; but a great machine, including the whole population in its details, in which each member has certain functions assigned to him, some of them governing functions, some functions of obedience. This body politic—as I may call it, to distinguish it from the mere masses which are thrown together without order, and are only to be estimated by their numbers—this body politic, I say, it is, which really constitutes the sovereignty of a free state such as our's. And if those who are assigned duties of more extended trust and more complicated difficulty be envied by persons whose lot is cast in an humbler sphere, merely because they enjoy dignities or emoluments which these do not, they may fairly silence their detractors by the old, but not the less appropriate fable of “The Belly and Members.”

You see I am taking some pains to impress on you these notions of mine. My reason is this,—that I see plainly you need to have your ideas set right on the subject of government. Your leaders have been now for some years clouding over the real principles of free government by the colouring of their speeches and writings, and have put out of your sight the simple truth, which is, that all government must be in



some sort a defective system, and that as long as wills, principles, prejudices, dispositions, tempers, habits, and actions, differ as they do, such a thing as liberty, in the sense they use the term, cannot exist for any one individual. The very existence of law shows that liberty is not. Law is nothing more or less than a restriction of individual liberty. But no state could exist an hour without laws ; so that in no state can liberty, in this sense, exist. I am now speaking of the “liberty” of your late leaders, and of our turbulent neighbours, the French. There *is* a liberty, indeed, which ought to exist, and without which no state can live and flourish. This liberty we enjoy. It is the liberty to have a due share in the making of our own laws,—to be ourselves parties to imposing restraints upon our own freedom. This, I need scarcely observe, we possess, in a representative system such as our’s, in which every person who can be supposed to be capable of forming an opinion on the subject, does directly, and in his degree, contribute to the constitution of that assembly to whom is intrusted the making of laws.

But even here it may be worth while to apply the principle I spoke of, and show you how small a part you have, and must ever have, individually, in the making of your laws;—and observe, by *you*, I do not mean you Irish, or you British, as an exception, but you of the lower classes all the world over;—by the working of those natural forces which influence communities in general. Let us suppose an election about

to take place for a member of Parliament. We will assume that the franchise is extended as was lately contemplated; that there are four times the number of electors amongst us that there are now. You, or I, may be one of the humblest of the individuals forming the constituency. Let us compare our actual influence with that which what we may call the *ideal* of liberty would give. Some person, known to us, perhaps, by name alone,—to whom we are unknown, even by name,—is nominated by the *public voice*—that is, by a few influential individuals. We hear what our neighbours have to say about him, and whichever way the herd goes, we either choose or are constrained to follow. We shoulder our way to the poll, name the candidate whom other and controlling influences have put forward, have our vote entered as a unit among thousands, and return, unregarded and forgotten, to boast of the privileges we enjoy! Such is the amount of our free-will. What would perfect liberty be?

The most sensible man I ever heard of on this point was an honest working iron-founder, who had a vote in a borough, and was visited in the foundry by the favourite candidate, who expected, no doubt, as a matter of course, to have the dingy operative on his list of supporters.

He accordingly addressed him in the usual style, descanted on the liberty of election, and requested the honour of his vote and interest.

“And I am free to vote for any body I please?” demanded the voter.

“Certainly; it is the glory of the British constitution.”

“Then I shall vote for Black Peter, the moulder, over yonder,—the man that faces the ladle.”

“Black Peter?”

“Ay; Black Peter. There’s not such another man in the borough. He stands the white heat like clay, and never was known to wink at a spark. *You* may attend to the concerns of the nation, but Black Peter knows what *we* want, and will look after our foundry interests better than any amongst ye all.”

“But you know you *must* vote for me, or for my opponent.”

“And you call that *freedom*! You take and melt me down, lift me to the mouth of the mould you have made yourselves, and turn me over, crying, ‘now run where you please!’ I’ll keep *my* vote, gentlemen. Now go and ask Black Peter for *his*.”

Thus you see how little liberty (in one sense) any elector can possess. And yet an election is the most favourable case that can be taken; because in it you have, the humblest of you, as much power, through your *vote*, as the highest member of society. It counts one; and so does the great man’s, and no more. Recollect I am not quite prepared to say whether it is wise that it should be so, or whether it is not precisely this indiscriminating quality which prevents an indefinite extension of the suffrage. But as to the fact, you see how it is, and how little power after



all a man in an inferior station can by any possibility have in an organized community, however free. I am anxious you should understand this, because I really do think that it is of consequence that we should know on what step of the ladder we stand. It is not only a bad thing, because it is ignorance, but a practical disadvantage, to be mistaken in a matter like this. Many of you are probably aware that, up to a few centuries ago, it was universally believed that this earth formed the centre of the universe, and that the whole system of the heavens rolled round us every four-and-twenty hours. When a wise man, called Copernicus, ventured to assert, as the result of his observations, that instead of being in the centre, we ourselves revolved round a body, which itself probably formed only a part of some still vaster system, men were inclined to think themselves affronted by the theory, and were quite incensed at the idea of the whole world being pushed on one side, as it were, by one learned individual. Yet, mark the practical consequence of the truth which humbled us;—it was by this very rectification of our place in the starry creation, that subsequent philosophers were able so to perfect astronomical science, as, amongst other practical discoveries, to make it an easy task for the mariner to ascertain what had always been the great difficulty in navigation—his longitude,—and thus to assure himself of his position, and regulate his course accordingly.

And so it must be with you. As long as you en-

tertain a mistaken opinion of your powers and position, you will not even enjoy as much power, either personally or nationally, as you actually possess. Far be it from me to advocate what has been called passive obedience, or to discourage the honourable independence which should make every citizen of a free state jealous of his liberties as of his reputation. Were I indeed an inhabitant of Persia, or China, I might preach very different doctrines from these ; but here, in Ireland, as an Irishman, I really do feel a dread lest your mistakes of this year should work against you in this way more speedily and fatally than you are aware of, and in a direction the reverse of what you calculated on. You are, I tell you, putting yourselves in great peril. You individually enjoy, at this moment, *less* liberty than you have ever done since the Emancipation Act of 1829. You have been unruly, and have yourselves provoked a struggle which has thrown you helpless into the hands of power; and, as I say, it is the keen apprehension lest what has been had recourse to as a temporary expedient, at a moment of danger and alarm, should be drawn into a precedent, and become a permanent principle in the government of Ireland, that makes me impress the truth upon you. I do see danger. I do recognise, in this period, a critical juncture. I discern the rocks before us; and I cry aloud to you to let Prudence take the helm.

I set out by saying that our destinies rest mainly with you. I repeat that assertion. See what you

have gained by being disorderly. You have got the handcuffs on. You have placed them on all your neighbours,—on *me*,—for we are all alike tied by the stringency of the present law. Renew your former courses, and the necessity of the State will impose fresh restrictions, or make the old ones permanent. Gain a sense of your true duties and interests, think as sensible men, and act as sober ones, and the bonds will in due time drop silently from our hands ; and we shall embrace once more, in the freedom of a constitution which, I verily believe, offers to the community the extreme amount of liberty consistent with human infirmity on the one side, and human happiness on the other.

The mention of our French neighbours reminds me of the three words they have taken up as their motto since February last : “ Liberty—Equality—Fraternity.”

Now, their “ Liberty” I have pulled to pieces pretty well, I think. “ Equality” is the next word; and as it has a very taking sound, we may as well see what it means, in the sense in which ordinary people, such as you and I, might be expected to understand it.

There are two ways to look at the word,—either as regards the artificial distinctions of society, or the individual rights of citizenship. Now, as to your place in society, no two amongst you ever were, or ever could be equal. Inequality is the very law



which constitutes society. You are unequal by nature ;—you were born unequal ;—you were bred unequally ;—you perpetuate and widen your reciprocal inequality. If any two of you happen to be equal in the morning, the chances are a thousand to one you will be unequal before evening.

Hence, society having made you and continuing you unequal, the spirit of our laws comes in and confirms while it tempers this inequality, by marking and recognising the distinctions of rank and property on the one hand ; and by breaking down the barriers that might confine the possession or acquisition of either to any one class of individuals on the other. It transfers the inequality from the person to the thing, and allows no disparity to exist, except where justice and the nature of society have already created it ;—and it is, let me tell you, the only true principle of legislation to follow the laws of nature, which are the laws of eternal truth.

But the Frenchman of the present day fancies himself too wise for all this. He says, man and man are alike, so they ought to be equal. Your *ought* is a great argument with men who forget there is such a word as *is*. Men *ought* to be good, but unfortunately they too often *are* not. Accordingly, to carry out their argument, they set about breaking up society, and casting it, like road-stuff, upon the highway of their republic, there to bind, if it will, into a compact and level surface. I shall be greatly surprised if some of those who expect to pass

smoothly over it by and by do not get a jolt which will try their springs, if it do not break their bones.

I said there was another way to look at the word Equality,—namely, with respect to our rights as citizens; and, in this sense, the British Constitution does in fact look upon every member of the community with an equal regard. It needs no lawyer to prove this. If one man kills another, be the slayer the proudest peer of the realm, and the slain the humblest, the poorest, the most abject, the most degraded of his kind,—that murderer must die. The life of the peasant *is*, in the eye of the law, notwithstanding the constant insinuations of the suppressed journals to the contrary, as valuable as the life of the peer.

And so in every other case. If a man's house be entered, his property stolen, his goods damaged, his person attacked,—nay, if a word be said to injure him by any one, no matter how much his superior in rank,—he has justice done to him, not proportioned to the relative stations of the parties, but to the offence. If the beggar in his hovel enjoy the light of day through a loop-hole in his mud wall, the proudest architect, the most extensive company, cannot throw up the palace or the factory so as to obstruct it, but the law takes his part, and protects his right. Perfect equality, as well as perfect impartiality, is the glory of our Imperial law; but, let me tell you, such was very far from being the case in our old Irish canons, and laws called Brehon laws.

This sort of “equality” you possess quite as fully

as the Frenchman, who cannot post a placard without printing the wonderful word, in the largest type, at its head.

There remains the third, to complete the charm,—“Fraternity.”

This also has two senses. It means, properly, brotherhood; and although our lively neighbours have seemed in the majority of their acts since they adopted it, to confound it with a word which sounds something like it, although it has a different meaning—Fratricide,—the killing of a brother or brothers,—it may be taken to signify any cordial or neighbourly demonstration or feeling,—the shaking of hands,—an affectionate embrace,—or any other display of duty towards our neighbours; and in this sense I should be sorry to think that we were not ready, all of us, to “fraternize.” But that this not the sense in which the French understand it, you can learn from their own mouths. A clever, bustling young man, named Louis Blanc, one of their favourite newspaper writers, told us plainly enough some time ago what his idea of “fraternity” was. In the month of February last, when to possess a newspaper in Paris was sufficient to make a man a cabinet minister, this Louis Blanc was elected one of the governors of France, and immediately put his views respecting “fraternity” in practice. Now, without going into his plan, it is perhaps enough to tell you (what you can easily learn, if you choose to read the history of the time) that it was this system of his which was the principal cause



of the bloody insurrection of June last, in which the capital city of the nation was made the scene of a contest which lasted four days, between four hundred thousand citizens, reduced to starvation by Louis Blanc's "fraternity," and the rest of the inhabitants, assisted by their friends from the country.

I say, I need not go into his plan; for whatever it was, it drove thousands to starvation, and hundreds of thousands to murder and rebellion.

But a knowledge of the facts I have been relating to you will enable you to see what, in France, was the real meaning of the *three glorious words*.

LIBERTY, with this Mr. Blanc and his friends (whom you have heard of, when they made a noise in the world, under the name of Communists) meant the power of reconstructing society,—that is, of breaking down all distinctions between high and low, rich and poor,—confiscating all property, of course, to do so; and then building up a new structure of the materials, in which the grand principle should be

EQUALITY;—which signified that everybody should be a labourer; that all everybody earned should be thrown into a common stock; that everybody, let him be clever or stupid, active or lazy, strong or weak, should receive the same amount of wages, and an equal participation of profits out of that stock. But, as men might naturally ask whether it was quite fair that the idle should be paid at an equal rate with the industrious, and that the industrious should work for the idle, a third term was introduced—

FRATERNITY;—of which the idea was, that under

the new system a spirit of brotherhood would spring up, and actuate the entire community, inducing each to do his best, and thus insuring the performance of work in the most effective and economical manner, so as to realize the anticipated "profit." I cannot help thinking that these Frenchmen, in addition to having made a mistake in supposing that men who have to make up a sum of money among them will each work more industriously than men who have a direct interest in their labour *by competition*,—a mistake which our Rundale tenancies will enable *you* to see through,—were also guilty of a piece of deception, in placing the three words in the order they have done ; and I will tell you why. The last word, *Fraternity*, took for granted a principle in our natures which might or might not exist. It had to be proved that men *would* do their best, when they had no immediate or direct interest in doing so.

Now, if the fact be,—as it has turned out,—that the principle does *not* exist, then the *Equality*, which is based on the principle, must go with it.

And the *Liberty* which allows men to put such false theories into practice must be withheld by the universal consent of society.

Hence, the words should run thus:—first, *Fraternity*;—then, if you can get men to "fraternize," *Equality*;—and if equality present any profits, after providing for wages, the aged and destitute, an improvement fund, &c. (all contemplated in Louis Blanc's plan), then *Liberty* to put the plan in operation.

Fellow-countrymen,—all this was child's play; you see that. But the worst of it is, that such child's play is man's ruin;—and, in fact, France has been ruined, almost beyond hope, in the course of her gambols. Are you aware that what your late leaders were endeavouring to bring you to was something very like this, only disguised, so as not at once to be identified with it? They begun at the same end of the series as the French did. “Liberty!” Everything was to be broken down, to leave the deck clear for action. “Equality!” Property was to be seized on by the new government, and portioned out like rations to the people. “Fraternity!” Human nature was to be reversed, and every man in the community was to set himself to make the new order of things work well, not for his own sake, but for that of the public, *like a patriot without a newspaper.*

Here in Ireland the experiment would have failed at once; but our ruin would have been marked by circumstances of horror peculiar to itself. Combined with England, we seem to command resources we really do not possess. If indeed a social revolution were to spread at once over both countries, while they remained connected, involved in the same risks, and ready to share the same success, that would be a fair experiment, and a case parallel to that of France. But if this,—the poorest, most populous, and least civilized part of the empire,—were first to break itself off from the richer and more powerful portion, from the seat of government and of commerce, from the



focus of wealth, enlightenment, and action, and, thus isolated, deprived of all self-sustaining power, to hazard the overthrow of society, and the formation of a new and untried system of things,—good God, would we not be undergoing *two* mangling operations at once, each of them more than a nation could bear? First, from an impoverished part of a great empire, making ourselves a bankrupt, petty state ; and then, alone and in beggary, wringing our vitals out in the mad endeavour to imitate the follies which had already deluged one of the mightiest empires upon earth with the blood of her own sons, and left her in the end almost as poor as ourselves !

I heartily thank God that all this is over for the present. The last embers of revolt are trodden out. You must perforce remain as you are, and make the best of your condition ; with the certainty, too, that you will have to go through another severe trial,—scarcity, at least, if not famine,—before you can realize your rational hopes, or fulfil your ultimate destiny.

There is one thing you must allow ; which is, that as things have turned out, you would have been better off now, if, instead of listening to the men who have brought you to the brink of rebellion and left you in a state of helpless disorganization, you had followed the advice of those persons who were all along recommending you, instead of resorting to threats and violence, and attending meetings and clubs, and lay-

ing out your earnings in buying arms, to set to work peaceably and good-humouredly to remedy your real evils, and make the best of the advantages you really possess. You must admit that you would feel more comfortable this day if you had refused to listen to the language of sedition and treason, and laughed at the men who bid you be angry because you were poor, as long as you had a mine in the plot you rented, which only needed to be worked to produce gold and silver.

You may think this a strong expression; but I can tell you it is nearer to being literally true, than some of the golden promises lately held out to you. I will show you how by and by. And there is this to be taken into consideration in the mean time, — that your peaceable demeanour would turn to your account in another way, without any exertion of your own whatever.

To understand how this is, you have only to reflect that the thing called *capital*, which is nothing more than the money which remains disposable in a man's pocket after he has satisfied his wants, has, like water, a natural tendency to seek its own level, passing from all sides into the channel of greatest depression. In Ireland what is wanted is capital,—the level is low. In England it is much higher, and capital would therefore naturally flow from the one country into the other, if it were not for the dams and obstructions you have set up by your associations and clubs, and that still more atrocious system of private assas-

sination which has till very lately disgraced our country.

I will give an instance of the necessity for capital in Ireland ; though I venture to say most of you do not need to have the thing proved. There are 20,898,271 statute acres of surface in Ireland. Now, according to a return made last year, it appears that of this there was no more than 4,041,317 acres employed in the growth of food for human beings !

Here is what it is the fashion to call “a great fact.” But, unfortunately, some of these “facts” seem to be so large that they cannot reach the inside of our heads, and take up a place where they may be of use. Facts are of no avail unless they are working like leaven within us. As long as they lie idle, they only thicken the brain and dull the wits. Set them in motion, and they will first ferment in reflection, and then clear into wisdom, which strengthens man for action. Nobody who had his senses about him, and was aware of this single “fact,” but would shrink from interrupting the flow of capital into a country in which four-fifths of the land produced nothing for the food of man, and what is called arable land is under-cultivated to a degree such as I shall presently show. At all events, to arrest the healing stream with such rude implements as bludgeons and pikes, is folly pretty nearly as monstrous as that laughed at by the old poet, of seeking to stop the current of nature with a pitchfork.

And yet that money is not only prevented from



flowing into the country, but actually driven out of it, is proved by the fact, that some English and foreign speculations are mainly supported by Irish capital ; witness the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, of which three-fourths of the paid-up capital of one million belong to Irish proprietors !

You have, I said,—you, I mean, who possess or rent land,—a mine of wealth at your door. Sir Robert Kane, the most accomplished, fairest, and most painstaking of those who have undertaken the honourable task of teaching us how to turn our advantages here in Ireland to the best account, after going into minute details of agricultural statistics, sums up what he has to say in these remarkable words: “It is well established that on the lands actually cultivated there might be raised *three times* the amount of food that is now produced, were a suitably improved system of agriculture brought into general use.”

Now, if all the land capable of cultivation was actually cultivated,—if it was all made to produce food for man,—and all raised to its highest productive power, we might have *fifteen times* as much food produced in the country as we have now !

Take it at a more moderate figure. We might certainly have five times as much. See how abundantly we should be fed ; or rather how much more than mere food, the lowest of human wants, we should be able to produce ! It is where necessity ends that comfort begins, and not till comfort is satisfied does

speculation or luxury begin to operate, according as the disposition of the individual points to acquisition or indulgence.

I say nothing of luxuries. As long as property is protected so long will luxury be found,—one of the means, though not the most worthy, by which capital is redistributed. But speculation is advantageous and necessary. Agricultural speculation you all allow to be so:—in this way I could show you that no less than £160,000,000 could be advantageously invested in Ireland; but, no matter what people tell you, the establishment of manufactures, even in this agricultural country, is easily shown to be calculated to advance our general prosperity to an unlimited extent.

So far, men of Ireland, I have been showing you how you stand, as to your condition and prospects. I take no credit to myself for the little details I have just entered into. I picked them, like valuable grains, out of the excellent books that have been written about our country and its resources; and if I dabble them in thus sparingly, it is because I have seen as abundant a return from the careful sowing of small truths as from scattering loose theories broadcast.

You will see that I have not attempted to strike out any plan for your guidance, so as to insure you prosperity; and the reason I have refrained from doing so is, because I believe that no *general* advice is of much particular use, every case having circumstances peculiar to itself, and needing to be dealt with

accordingly. I have no faith in “grand comprehensive schemes.” The premium held out for a “grand comprehensive scheme” for Ireland is like that offered for the “perpetual motion,”—it is not likely to be claimed ; but the worst of it is, it wastes in experiments the time of people who might be employed about something better. The evils with which we are overrun here in Ireland have been of slow growth, and they must be removed by a slow and patient process of weeding. Besides, the able writers I speak of, and others, have written so much upon the subject, that it could not be expected that I should suggest anything new. Instruction of the safest and soundest kind you may any of you have, for little more than the asking. There are pamphlets, full of useful knowledge, to be had at a few shillings the hundred ; and indeed any reasonable landlord would be too happy if you would ask him to give you some of these publications.

But although I have no idea of striking out plans for you to follow, I may as well just glance at a few of the most important measures of improvement that have been either adopted or recommended of late. I need not say a word of Sir Robert Kane’s book, because it is not for you to understand it. It treats of the resources of Ireland in a style suited to men who make the subject their study as a science ; and as you have not time to do so, you must be content to benefit by it through the intervention of those who will bring it in its results to your door.



But there is one question which has been more fully examined of late than it ever was,—the question, namely, respecting land, its proprietorship, transfer, and division. In the session of Parliament about to terminate, some important changes have been made in the law respecting land. An Act has been passed, rendering the sale by embarrassed proprietors of their estates comparatively easy, the operation of which will be to reduce the difference between the nominal and real means of the owners of land in Ireland, by replacing such of them as are disabled by their circumstances from performing the part assigned to them with regard to their estates, by persons free from those disabilities.

Again,—an equally salutary measure, though on a smaller scale, has just been carried through by the enterprise of a private company, which has obtained an Act enabling it to purchase estates in Ireland as they come into the market, to be sold in small lots to proprietors in fee, who are to pay a portion of the purchase-money by instalments, to extend over a limited number of years. The suggestions of that sound and practical writer, Mr. Pim, on this subject, it is right to say, had been forestalled years ago by the excellent Irishman who has been the main instrument in the formation of this company, and in obtaining the favourable consideration of Parliament towards it.

It would be endless to tell you all the remedies adopted or proposed for the economic evils of Ire-

land. Some of them relate to the reclamation of our waste lands by Government. Such is Mr. Fagan's plan. Some to their reclamation by the enterprise of a private company. This is the new Irish Amelioration Society's scheme. Others recommend the extension of the railway system; others the spread of agricultural information, and the encouragement of the cultivation of flax. Others, again, call our attention to a general system of drainage,—of the lands—or of the population. Some point to the fisheries,—on which subject a salutary measure has been passed; others to the mines. Mr. J. W. Smith recommends the formation of roads, afterwards convertible into railroads; and has a plan of his own for floating harbours.

Such are a few of the most popular plans for bettering your condition. You see how many heads are working for you. There is a great deal that is good in these plans, and scarcely one of them that might not be included as part of a general movement towards the furtherance of our real interests. Believe me, you could ill do without this “upper class” of intellect to think for you. If you had all their abilities, you have neither their education nor their leisure. Were you to set about deciding what to do, you would starve before you had time to acquire the knowledge necessary to ground your decision.

It is no proof, because you do not see what men of learning are doing, or have done for you, that you derive no benefit from them. An artisan may be

utterly ignorant of the principles according to which the implement he makes use of has been constructed. Many a weaver would be unable to explain to you the simplest piece of mechanism. It is still more likely that the farmer will be unable to tell you why it is he adopts a particular system. He will tell you that it is because it proves the best ; but the idea of a first discoverer, and of mental labour having been applied to it, never crosses his mind.

Yet it is by the most powerful intellects, and by means of the closest observation and deepest study, that the received agricultural system has been worked out. I will not now stop to prove this ; but when I see such a man as Sir Humphry Davy, for instance, entering as he does into the science of the rotation of crops, and showing the chemical principles on which the true system has been based, I cannot help asking myself,—and asking *you*,—what would become of the farmer without the philosopher?

There is another class of mind-labourers quite as useful to the community as any other, though they come seldomer before the public eye. I mean those who look into the natural laws by which social questions are governed, for the purpose of ascertaining what is the easiest way of accomplishing what all admit to be the first object—the greatest prosperity of the greatest number. This is called Political Economy. I remember volunteering to say, on a former occasion, that I was no political economist. Nor



am I. But I think it right you should know that Political Economy is a genuine as well as a difficult and an abstruse science, and one, moreover, which concerns us all in its conclusions. As far as it is founded on natural principles, it must, of course, do so.

Without puzzling you with questions of this science, I may, however, mention, that it clearly points out the folly of expecting that "Government" can help you out of all your difficulties. Government can do little more for private individuals than secure them the liberty of doing the best for themselves ; and then the general law comes into play, that what is for the interest of the individual is also for the interest of the community at large. All that the Legislature need do is to take off its hand—to avoid interfering with trade, commerce, manufactures, agriculture ; to leave the natural laws which govern them to work freely ; and they will adjust the balance more truly than any wisdom of man could possibly do.

I have set my eye lately on a little treatise by Professor Hancock, in which these matters are rationally explained. Amongst other notions which he strives to combat, or at least to modify, is that so commonly entertained amongst us, of the monstrous evil of absenteeism. On this subject his remarks are well worth attending to. Of course I do not say a word of it in a moral point of view,—in that light we must all deplore it;—but, viewing it simply as a matter of pounds,

shillings, and pence, I ask you, when you complain of the *rich* absentees *spending* money out of the country, do you remember the *poor* absentees, who *earn* money out of it? Do you know that there are 500,000 Irish earning their bread in England and Scotland? Do you recollect that 50,000 additional Irish reap the harvest in England every year, and bring home their earnings? So you see, to balance the capital withdrawn from the country, what a vast amount of labour is also withdrawn from it. Indeed the balance is in our favour,—for the capital of absentees, actually spent out of the country, does not exceed one-twenty-eighth part of the value of the produce of the country; whereas the amount of labour withdrawn might be expressed numerically by nearly a sixteenth of the sum of its population.

Believe me, you will find, when you come to take other alleged causes of complaint to pieces, that they will many of them prove less unanswerable than they seem. People are fond of saying that farms have been too much subdivided; yet those counties in which the farms are the smallest,—Down and Armagh, are, in fact, the most prosperous in Ireland. Again, we are told that Ireland is over-populated; and our unfortunate families, when they feel the pressure of want here, are encouraged to emigrate, as the *only* chance for them. I hate that emigration “remedy,” I must say. I hate it, just as I hate the idea of taxing or punishing absentees. To force people *into* or *out of* the country is contrary both to my principles

and my feelings. It is tyrannical, and only shows ignorance of true statesmanship. Bribe them by tranquillity and industry to remain, if you please, but let there be complete freedom of ingress, egress, and regress (as the lawyers say), and no obligation to perform any of these acts. Just as trade, to be as flourishing as possible, ought, in theory, to be as free as possible. How can emigration be necessary, until the land is forced up to its limit of production ?

The disease of poverty, arising from an overstocked labour market, exists. It ought not to exist, and you have a right to use your best endeavours to lessen it. But you must reflect that nobody denies its existence, and nobody says that it ought to continue. The only dispute is, that *you* say you will get rid of it by having your own Parliament here, by taxing the absentees, by establishing tenant-right, by fixing tenures, and by equalizing rents. Whereas *I* say that, not to speak of the political injury they would do to the Empire of which Ireland forms a portion, every one of these measures are unwise, opposed to the deductions of reason and the results of observation, and, in a word, calculated to render you eventually poorer than you are.

You see we agree in our object, which is, to make you comfortable and happy. It is my interest as an Irishman to wish for this, because neither I nor my family can be comfortable or happy in our station, whatever it may be, nor indeed prosper as we might



do in that station, as long as a mass of destitution and discontent exists around us. It is a direct disadvantage to any man, be his position what it may, from the peer to the industrious peasant, to belong to a country suffering from pauperism ; and hence it is the manifest interest of every man, peer and peasant, in this country, to better its condition. We make common cause—we are partners in the concern.

I talk not now of the idle or of the profligate ;—such there are amongst the rich,—such there are amongst the poor. By the moral constitution of our nature it always has been so, and ever will be so. That they injure society in proportion to their elevation in it, is too true ; but not more than the industrious and the virtuous benefit it, in their degree. In this sense, the life of a peer is worth the lives of many peasants,—for evil or for good, as the case may be ; that is, it has more influence on the community than the lives of many peasants. Look at Lord George Hill, for instance. He is a landlord who possesses a large estate in the north of Ireland, which, when he purchased it, was a wild tract of mountain. By unremitting labour, directed by careful study and a natural sagacity, he has succeeded in a few years in making it a fertile district, supporting numerous contented and comfortable farmers, who give fair wages to their labourers, and returning him a large and remunerating profit. Such a man is a national benefactor. But his utility is enhanced by his position ;

and consequently his life is, for the purposes of the country, as that of a general is for his army, worth more than the lives of many of his tenants.

I say, I speak not of the idle and the profligate ; from the highest to the lowest, they do all the mischief in their power. Thank God, even from their extravagance good is ultimately derived to the community. Property would accumulate dangerously in the hands of individuals and of families, were it not for the improvidence which the possession of wealth not earned by ourselves so often gives rise to ; and thus is proved the beautiful adjustment of things by Providence, which renders even evil itself the unconscious instrument of carrying out its beneficent designs to the human species at large. But this is no excuse for the spendthrift;—and it must be recollected that the uniform natural tendency of these bad qualities amongst the rich, is to degrade them from their influential position, and place them—or their descendants—once more at the bottom of the scale, as units amidst the mass of the population.

But I am inclined to suspect that when you look at your own horny hands, and see others that have never handled a reaping-hook belonging to persons better fed and clothed than you are, you say to yourself—“Am I to have hard work and bad fare, and these people no work and the best of fare?”

This you say in ignorance. There are, it is true, some among the higher orders who—whether fortunately for themselves or not is very doubtful—are

under no obligation to work at all ; but it is nevertheless true, that the great majority of men belonging to what you call the upper classes lie under the same necessity as you do to work for their bread, and *do* work, many of them infinitely harder than most of you.

Did you ever hear that there is such a thing as sweat of the brain, as well as sweat of the brow ? Did you ever hear knowledge compared to a stiff soil, hard to dig, and slow of produce ? Have you ever heard of the labour of business, of professions, of statesmanship, as well as of handy-work ?

Well, I can tell you that it is lucky for you that you are not obliged to make the experiment in your own person, of the relative *work* your lot and mine impose upon us. True, I hold the pen, and you the plough. But, believe me, it does not follow that *you* are the labourer, and *I* am the idler.

You suffer great hardships ; you are exposed to all the severities of the weather ; your limbs are racked with fatigue ; your food is coarse, often scanty. All this cannot be denied.

Do you think it would be a change for the better to have the thoughts eternally drudging away in an unexercised body, carrying forward through a struggling life the studies of a cramped and crippled boyhood, until that degree of skill is mastered sufficient to render the calling that is chosen a source of profit to one's self, and a provision for one's family ; and all the time this body, which denies happiness to him



who neglects its requirements, failing the overtasked mind, oppressing it with its maladies, refusing it the refreshment of sleep, disquieting it with anxious agitations, and finally, perhaps (too often the sequel of the story), sweeping out the whole record of a life's toil and a life's acquirements, with the gaunt finger of insanity ?

But whichever be the better lot, the labour of the brow or the labour of the brain, God has imposed *both* inevitably on man ; and you or I—society cares not which—*must* undergo the one or the other.

There is an old story of leave having once been given to men to exchange the burden of their cares with each other. They had scarcely felt the new ones, when they one and all prayed to have their own once more upon their shoulders.

You have little idea how many of those clever men who are breaking their hearts with study, are at this moment toiling for *your* good. There are great societies established entirely for this object. These societies are increasing ; and there are more men setting their wits to work to make out ways of bettering your condition now, than there ever were before, since you were a people. If I had room, I could fill pages with their names. There never was a time in which the condition of the poor occupied so much of the attention of the rich. And there are two causes to which this happy amelioration is to be set down ; one is, the increasing conviction that the true interests of the poor and the rich are insepara-

bly united, and that in all the concerns of the former a similar spirit ought to be adopted, and for a similar reason, as that which now prompts the latter to use every precaution to prevent the origin and spread of infectious and contagious diseases amongst the population,—a spirit, namely, of *self-preservation*. And the other is,—I feel my heart glow with satisfaction when I say it,—the spread and power of a Christian philanthropy in dealing with our fellow-men, urging the duties we owe our neighbours into practical operation, as much for the gratification afforded to the benefactor as for the benefit done to the object. And here I may as well observe, that it is from design I omit further mention of the influences of religion on our condition ; not that I deem them unimportant ; on the contrary, I believe that on the amount of those influences amongst communities of men depends not only their ultimate happiness, but the degree of individual comfort and social tranquillity they will enjoy, be their circumstances what they may. But I am anxious to be of use to all of you, in matters in which all can agree ; and I do not wish to touch upon a topic which, strange as it may seem, has unhappily always been in this country the watchword of division and strife.

I say, all these kindly pains have been taken for years ;—never so much as lately. It was lately that you were not only pauperized but starving,—not only distressed but destitute. Then, indeed, the upper classes put their shoulders to the wheel. What was

the grant of ten millions compared to the private charities I have spoken of? Prayers, tears, entreaties ; women foregoing not only pleasure, but their own personal affairs, to gather little heaps of relief for you ; men putting by their own pressing avocations, that they might devote their whole energies to lighten your distress. And yet,—gracious God ! that I should have to say it !—THIS was the time when you,—not you the starving, not you the helpless and destitute,—oh no!—you, the *relieved*,—you, the survivors of the famine, because Government and good men had said that you must not die—that, no matter who paid for it, you *must be fed*,—YOU, I say, entered into a conspiracy to cut the throats of your benefactors in cold blood ! Can it be believed ? Where do we find evidence of it ? In the only journals you would buy,—in the journals you bought by thousands ;—in the only speeches you would listen to,—in the speeches you shouted your applause of.

Too true. When men who wished you well were passing day after day and night after night in toil, examining the most subtle operations of nature, and exploring the secrets of science, to devise means for increasing the fertility of your fields, to put you in the way of receiving double and triple returns for your labour and your outlay, and to turn your crops to the best account, you were devoting that harvest, not to the market of peace, but to the commissariat of war ; and determining, in the bitterness of your hearts, that the more plenteous it proved, the more



vengeance you would take upon the objects of your hatred.

A sore, sore subject is this ; a disheartening, overwhelming subject. But I dare not, for your sakes as well as my own, pass it over.

Yes, you listened to your schoolmasters,—you went out into your fields in the openness of the summer sky, when the face of heaven was unveiled, and there you lifted up your hands and uttered the impious vow.

You turn your eyes to the earth again. What do you see ? While they were raised in blasphemy, the breath of the angel of God had gone forth, and blackness, and decay, and despair were at your feet.

Did not your heart tell you, at that moment, that the judgment was *deserved* ? Had you not become parties to a plot for wholesale butchery ? Were not all the softer and kinder emotions of your souls stifled within you, and the brutal instincts and savage passions left to riot there alone ? Were you not banded to place weapons of death in the grasp of your children ; to receive the implements of murder from the hands of your wives and daughters ; to rise against all who would not join in the blind rush of your rage ; and—in the words of your own journalist—to “ ease your longing thirst deep, deep in the blood ” of the peaceful and the good ?

Of course all this entered into your hearts and was ready to nerve your arm “ in the times that were

coming." All this would, of course, be carried out with frightful effect on the first opportunity. Your chieftain went among you ; you rose in arms ; you crowded round him ; you shouted aloud. He led you to the attack ; you fought ; you were defeated, —*but you took a prisoner* ; not merely one of *us* ; he belonged to the very corps that had defeated you and killed your comrades.

Now was the time for the "thirst" of years to be slaked. Oh, what cruelties you must have wreaked on the person of that unhappy man ! How you must have lingered over the work of torture, lest he might have become too soon unconscious of his own agonies and your triumph ! Paris had tutored you in various ingenious devices, even if your own leaders had been remiss in this respect.

But you must have done all this very secretly. I cannot find a trace of it in the accounts before the public. Surely there must have been something withheld ; or you were of all assassins the most unaccountable when you let slip so good an opportunity. I cannot discover that you tore your prisoner limb from limb ; that you even so much as thought of the saintly advice to make your enemies, any of you who had the power, at least less by one. Oh ! no ; I forgot,—*and the wretches who schooled you forgot*,—that, if you had Irish miseries and Irish wrongs, you had Irish hearts ; and that the helpless captive was safe under the shadow of these, in the midst of his enemies. Carroll was freely and at once

given his life by the whole body of insurgents, because one man asked it for him; and this, though you knew full well that your safety lay in despatching him. Thus reprieved, he was handed over to four of your body, who might now have got rid of their charge, in a moment, and in the most satisfactory way. Three of these left the unarmed prisoner yet alive in the custody of the fourth, in whom it would have been only common prudence to have put him out of the way. But, no; not even then did the injunctions of the journals or the stern dictates of self-preservation seal his doom. They both suffered from exhaustion; and the sentinel would not partake of refreshment without sharing it with his prisoner. This could only end in one way. Generosity, humanity, brotherly-kindness, got the better of the Irish rebel and his wrongs; and, forgetting the fearful responsibility he himself incurred, he dismissed the man, whose natural course was to his quarters to give evidence against him!

Was ever a more affecting trait heard of in the annals of warfare? Why, instances of self-sacrificing generosity such as this, have been recorded as the crowning incidents in the career of heroes. I wish I could see the man who acted thus, that I might thank him on the part of my country.

Do you believe, now, that I look upon the blackening of your fields as a curse from on high? Seldom indeed have the judgments of the Almighty fallen where they could only strike the poor and the destitute.



And will you, my suffering, brave, and wronged countrymen!—will you, while we can scarcely repress our tears of admiration and compassion,—will you allow yourselves any longer to be mixed up in the eyes of the world with the sanguinary ruffians who thought they had brought your metal to the temper of their own case-hardened hearts, and suffer yourselves to be called cowards because you could not bring yourselves to be drilled into their murderous discipline? Thrust them out from your ranks—discard them—renounce them: and, now that law and order are likely to be re-established, show by your sayings and doings, that, bewildered as you were by miseries you could not escape, and arguments you could not refute, you never did more than barely tolerate the brutal suggestions of these journals, for the sake of the hopes they inspired, and the glorious destiny they pictured for our country.

Shake them off, I say. You never felt with them. You never thirsted for blood, though you hungered for food. And I will tell you more. You never were brought to believe even in your own wrongs: you could not persuade yourselves that you were over-ridden by a hostile, and a stranger, and a tyrant rule. On the contrary, you saw that you lived under mild and just laws, and that you were mixed up with your British brothers by ties so intimate, that the very races were melted together into one, so that Saxon and Celt were words that had no real meaning. None of you were there that had not friends,

brothers, cousins, working amongst the working men in England or the Colonies. Few of you that had not patrons, friends, or relations of that wide-spread and powerful race in your own neighbourhood. Subjects of the same sovereign, citizens of the same mighty empire, participators in the unexampled privileges of British freedom, you were in a false position when you were marshalled against that sovereign, that empire, and that freedom ; and you felt at the bottom of your hearts that you could not devote yourselves with true courage to such a cause. A great man—one who knew human nature as well as any human being ever did—once wrote, that “conscience doth make cowards of us all.” Some little man said the other day that we could not get up even a respectable rebellion here. The little man was right, though he could not see why. If he wants to know what you *can* do, let him read the accounts of any of the combats of the Peninsula,—Fuentes D’Onor, for instance ; or cast his eye, as I did lately, over a toy, called a model, of part of the battle of Waterloo, in which the artist has exhibited you on your chargers, sabre in hand, foremost of all, buried amongst the battalions of the French, hewing your way to glory. *There* the Irishman was in his right place ; and nobly did he acquit himself, fighting, as a loyal subject and citizen, for his sovereign and his country. Yes,—from commanding the armies of Europe to serving in their ranks, my countrymen have ever proved themselves worthy of the British as well as

the Irish name, and earned a place in the brightest pages of history. It was only degrading yourselves, and casting a slur on the reputation you had so justly and nobly earned, to band yourselves in a loose and clumsy confederation, under a set of ignorant enthusiasts, who knew so little of real strength and real science, as to see in a regiment of Her Majesty's troops, with all its discipline, system, experience, and unity, nothing more than a thousand men; and to picture in a half-armed mob, without a single trace of combination or order, that mighty and complicated piece of machinery called an army.

All this folly has passed away. The experience of the last few months has banished the delusion that had been growing up for twenty years.

And now another state of things has opened to Ireland. You look upon yourselves and others with a different eye. It is not hostile armies that present themselves in Her Majesty's troops. It is your own countrymen ranged in defence of peace and order, surrounding you with friendly care, restraining your violence, to protect you *from yourselves*.

But, oh ! we dare not forget this,—the food is in danger ! The great question for us all is, what is to be done to save us from a new famine ? I have heard men of science say that they could prove to me that the best thing for a nation to do in a case like our's is, to leave it to private enterprise and pri-



vate benevolence to provide for and remedy the impending evil. Even our great countryman, Edmund Burke, gave it as his opinion, that if Government ever stretched out its hand to feed the people, they would infallibly take the first opportunity to turn and bite it. And I have heard men of the world say that the Empire ought not to be expected again to drain its resources for the relief of that population which rose and cursed the hand that was stretched out to it, and conspired against the lives and properties of its benefactors ; urging, as an additional reason, the probability of a scarcity of food in every part of Her Majesty's dominions, and the low state of national credit.

I will not listen to either of these classes of reasoners. The first, with their science, I throw overboard at once, by asking them whether they are prepared quietly to allow thousands to die of hunger, in order that relief may not beget ingratitude ; that is, to do a certain evil, in order to avoid an evil that is uncertain ? And as for the second, whether they be right or wrong, I do not believe that the generous and compassionate hearts of the British people will stop to reason about the matter at all. Certain I am, that if they are fated to see a helpless and deluded peasantry once more stretched in the agonies of hunger at their feet, though they may be the very peasantry who had pointed their pikes at their throats, they will forget everything but the claims of destitution ; and, taking warning by the mistakes of the last fa-

mine, pour in upon the famishing districts of our country a still more copious, a still more accurately regulated, and a still more economically administered supply of food than they had done before.

I do from my heart hope—and I strongly advise,—that when the necessity shall appear they may begin *in time*.

It is not my object, in speaking to you, to enter further on this question, nearly as it concerns you. It is for other ears,—and to them the Irish patriot might well address himself.

My business now is with *you* ; and your business is with yourselves. You have many foolish ideas to get rid of. Some of them, the events that have lately occurred at home and abroad have necessarily removed. You will be more respected, even by the nations you have been so long looking to for sympathy, when you have discarded them all. They could scarcely help laughing when they heard you call yourselves slaves, at the very time your newspapers were speaking open treason, and your leaders openly drilling you against your Queen. They actually said you were suffering under an *excess of liberty* !

Some of you, who are anxious for peace and quietness, will ask me—how can this excitement, this rage and exasperation, ever pass off ? Surely, they say, if the passions are roused by a sense of grievances, real or fancied, it is not by force or fear that these ugly tenants of the human breast can be ejected ?

Now, here, experience—or history, which is nothing more than recorded experience—comes to our aid; and history shows that, so far from political excitement being a permanent state of things, it has a natural tendency to abate, like the flames of a fever, and cannot indeed exist at its height for any very long period. On questions precisely similar to that which you have made your watchword—Repeal—there have been national ferments equally violent with your's, which have subsided in a few years, without leaving a trace behind them; and given place to permanent peace and contentment.

From the many instances I could produce, I shall choose one, partly because my attention has been lately drawn to it, and partly because it is, in all its parts, both appropriate to our case and highly instructive to you.

Brittany, which was, up to the period of the first French Revolution, a province of France, had been originally a separate state, and was united to the French Crown by the marriage of the reigning duchess with the King of France. About the beginning of the last century, after this union had been long established, it took a fancy for “Repeal,” and the whole province became a scene of violent excitement and open preparation for war. The “Lord Clarendon” of the day, however, poured his troops into it; and the leaders, who had embarked their whole influence and property in the movement, either were taken and executed, or fled, penniless, into



Spain. But mark the sequel. When, a few years afterwards, the fugitives were permitted to return, they found everything changed. The citizens and people of Brittany were now the most zealous supporters of the union, which had opened to them a lucrative commerce with foreign countries ; and the men who had lost their all in the popular cause, discovered at last, that even popularity itself had deserted them.

And, in like manner, I not only hope, but believe, that ten years hence your leaders may find you too advantageously occupied to recollect even their promises ; and that you may yourselves look back with astonishment to the year 1848, and view its history, from the waking prosperity of your condition, as if it had been a troubled dream.

THE END.



## LUCK AND LOYALTY.

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OF the most eventful year that has ever risen on Ireland the last sands are running out.

Few periods of the world's history have been so eventful everywhere ; certainly none in which occurrences of extreme national importance have followed each other in such rapid succession, in so many great countries.

No one who looks beneath the surface can say that because Great Britain has preserved a calm exterior, she has not been agitated by the operation of forces scarcely less tremendous than those that have openly convulsed the other kingdoms of Europe. When Vesuvius for the first time within the historic period burst into flame and resumed its place amongst the active volcanoes of the earth, it is within the limits of possibility that a slightly greater degree of hardness or thickness in the crust which had caked over the eruptions of an unknown era might have kept down the subterranean elements for ever, and that the olive and the vine might to this



day have flourished where the crater now yawns, and the palace and the amphitheatre yet tower from the undesolated plain, instead of being dug out of their sepulchre of ashes.

In like manner, we are not to argue that because England is still England, with the integrity of her institutions and of her political continuity unbroken, she has not gone through a great crisis. The eventful "*Monday*" was, as it turned out, an alarm. It might have been a revolution.

*Here*, with all the tumult of preparation,—the rustling of the rising of an entire people,—anything that could have occurred would nevertheless have been of unspeakably less importance to Ireland itself than was the issue of the projected meeting on Kennington Common ; for, in every great movement in England, we are necessarily and at once involved ; whereas even the partial or temporary success of rebellion here would only have been the beginning of an end, the actual and abiding result being deferred until the whole strength of the British empire had been brought into action.

It is instructive to look behind us,—for history, like Hebrew, is to be read backwards,—and observe how many things have concurred to produce the results we see ; how differently events might have turned out, had *other* events turned out differently ; how strikingly things within our control have been affected by things beyond it ; and hence, how uniformly,—to use a common phrase,—“ the luck has

been on our side." Let me substantiate what I say by a rapid summary of recent occurrences.

It was at the beginning of this year that the party calling itself "Young Ireland," being that section of the old O'Connell combination which conceived that to move in a circle did not imply progression, unless the circle was brought into contact with some resisting body,—having on this ground separated itself from the other,—found itself in its highest state of efficiency and discipline. It was swelled by the most energetic and least sordid disciples of the parent school; it was evidently in earnest; and it had inflammable materials to work upon, in a great population scarcely recovering from starvation, and conceiving itself inadequately fed by grumbling opulence. Words of defiance which could not be misunderstood were uttered; and an organization, which might at any moment be converted into a military one, was energetically carried forward.

We were at that period, be it remarked, at peace with the whole world; and the great countries of Europe were at peace with each other. In all of them, too, internal order prevailed, although it was expected that the death of the French monarch, naturally looked for at no very distant period, must embroil that nation in an intestine war, and probably compromise the tranquillity of Europe. It was principally to the chances of that event that the disaffected party in this country looked. That they were determined to *act*, sooner or later, was plain. An ultimate appeal to force seemed inevitable.

Now, had Europe still remained unmoved, things would in all probability not have ripened here as rapidly as they did. We should have had preparations going on, and the usual incitements applied, for a longer period, which would have brought us forward to the time when a second potato failure would have afforded fresh stimulus to public discontent, and a harvest would have been available for the purposes of an insurgent force.

Our first piece of "luck," then, was, that France overthrew her government in the month of February.

However, as far as any of us could see, that event was precisely the thing most calculated to serve the cause of revolution in this country, and damage the imperial interests within it. It seemed better even than a dispute about the succession, in case Louis Philippe had died, for it left France free of such internal questions, to expend its military fury in collision with neighbouring nations.

I believe that scarcely a person existed, possessing even the most superficial knowledge of the French character and history, who did not feel that it was the thirst of Frenchmen for war that was at the bottom of most of the discontents of that country; or, at all events, that that known passion would have seized on the first opportunity afforded it for gratification;—and, moreover, that a war with England was what was most likely to suit the temper of those turbulent spirits who had for years regarded with sullen dissatisfaction the termination of our last continental struggle, and longed to pay off old scores.



Certainly no man alive imagined that the French people, set free from all restraint, and left to run riot in practical anarchy, would suffer a month to go over without an overwhelming onslaught on this powerful and envied neighbour-kingdom.

On the 22nd of February France rose, and threw off her government. She elected a new one,—provisionally, it is true, but invested with full powers to act, and only less influential than a permanent one in the means of checking popular extravagance. Amongst the members of that government, one of the most influential was a man who had always identified himself in a remarkable manner with hostility to England and sympathy for Ireland. He had, at a time when his own country and ours were alike unshaken, boldly proffered aid to the disaffected party here; and announced himself the friend of any movement having for its aim to disengage Ireland from British connexion. All the members of that government were essentially democrats,—some of them little short of sheer communists.

It was, therefore, apparently impossible that any circumstances could concur more favourable to the views of the revolutionists here. A French invasion seemed inevitable; and we thought ourselves doomed to see Ireland at last the theatre of a European war.

A man, however, was thrown up to the surface of the whirlpool, who might seem to the observer who looked at Irish interests alone, to have been

raised for the express purpose of discomfiting the schemes of the insurgent body here, as he was certainly deposed from his eminence as soon as he had served our purpose. That man—a poet, a dreamer, as we had thought—rose gradually into the ascendant in the councils of France ; and his power became at last so absolute, that by his sole influence he was enabled not only to sway the whole body of his associates in authority, but to temper the passions and neutralize the prejudices of the most headstrong nation of Europe,—a nation which had placed him where he was only to work out their own objects. This man, actuated by what we would be inclined to call an unaccountable impulse, had already determined to refuse co-operation with the party through which France might best have humbled England, before a formal delegation from its body had reached the shores of his country.

This was our second piece of “luck.”

Revolutionary excitement, however, is shown by the induction of history to be epidemic. It is as much in the air as cholera. Masses become infected with it, and even robust intellectual constitutions with difficulty resist its influence. This fact is so apparent and so striking, that “political monomania” has lately been made the subject of medical inquiry both in these countries and on the Continent, with a view to its psychological elucidation.

It was not to be expected, therefore, that even sober England should escape. In fact, large masses

of her population began to move like the *convulsionnaires* of a century ago ; and about the first of April last looked as if they too were inclined to play the fool. She set to work in her usual business-like manner, and a grand attempt was agreed to be made to overawe Government, of which the day and hour were duly notified to the insurgents—and to the authorities.

In this game Ireland had indeed an interest. A sort of armistice ensued, as if by a tacit understanding, in order that each party here should have leisure to look on.

You all know the result of the memorable 10th of April. England, with all its ardour, had inherited too vast an estate to play at the thimble-rig of revolution. It did no more than shake its head and point to the constable, and the alluring board was hawked off to a safer part of the course.

This was, of all the rest, the most important piece of “luck” for Ireland.

Well: the battle was to be fought single-handed.

There were men of courage and ability, however, engaged in the movement ; too deeply pledged to retreat, too zealously inclined to falter.

One amongst them had of late occupied the foremost rank ; a man well fitted to lead a forlorn-hope, but ill calculated to manage a complicated system of warfare. Headstrong, ambitious, fierce, reckless,—a Catiline in all but his rank,—the greater the difficulties which rose around him, the more dog-



gedly did he pursue the course he had chalked out for himself. The dictates of prudence and of principle were alike disregarded, and the leadership of a mighty people became in his hands a personal and mortal conflict with his individual enemies.

Nor were the terms in which his maxims were couched one whit less characteristic of the man than his actions. Indeed, in utter inaptness as well as in impotent brutality, his counsel to his followers as to their mode of dealing with Lord Clarendon reminds one of "the Chicken's" pugilistic advice to his pupil in the case of Mr. Dombey,—“Double him up!”

The operations on both sides were at this time unspeakably important, looking at their results. Both parties stood prepared. The eyes of Europe were upon the contest: a false move on either side was sure to be fatal; and this was known to every looker-on.

The great thing to avoid was the initiative. We all knew that. No man in his senses but would, *once his organization was complete*, have cautiously abstained from committing himself in any way not involving what lawyers call “the general issue.”

Mitchel had two courses open to him. The Crown and Government Security Bill was sure to pass shortly, for the English people had (“luckily” for us) just had an alarm which overcame the scruples of timidity and the obstructing influences of faction. One course was, to take the field at once.

The other was, to remain both passive and silent, and put it upon Government to stretch out its hand towards him, and proceed upon acts done or words spoken or written *before* the passing of the Act. On the supposition that he doubted the result of what he was doing, his conduct seems unaccountable. But even supposing he had calculated on success, it was sheer folly to throw down the gage *upon a collateral question*.

Mitchel, however, as I have said, all along acted as an individual combatant. Ireland, it is true, might have suffered little by his forbearance, but *he* would have been silenced—for a time ; and this his nature could not brook.

He continued to speak out as he had done.

The false step was instantly taken advantage of. He was arrested, tried, convicted, and sentenced for the publications of the 6th and 13th of May, *both subsequent to the passing of the Act*, which received the Royal assent on the 22nd of April. There could be no mistake as to the course the Executive must take. The law was clear. England, Europe, America saw that. It had just passed, and was intended to be acted on. Lord Clarendon must either have evacuated the Castle, or have seized Mitchel.

Hence the initiative was the latter's. If I lay a man-trap in my grounds, and post a warning notice respecting it, the man who enters the premises, after having read the notice, has only himself to thank if he is caught by the leg.

Once Mitchel left the shores of his country as an exile, the "GAME WAS UP."

All that followed was marked by wildness and incoherence ; but the measures resorted to partly made up by their desperate truculence what they wanted in prudence. Such is generally the course of men on the brink of ruin.

The friends of the protomartyr must, of course, vow themselves to his liberation, or volunteer to die in the attempt. But they were manifestly waterlogged; for, as it happened, the convict himself had spared no pains to instruct the Irish people that *their* destinies were wrapped up in *his*, and that on the issue of his personal encounter with power depended the great question of their success. Hence, there was a general depression in the public mind, which, it now appears evident, influenced the other members of the conspiring body at least to defer a decisive movement in aid of their victimized comrade.

The personal character of Mitchel, then, was a "lucky" circumstance for us.

Had France continued to preserve internal order, and succeeded in extricating herself from the financial, material, and social difficulties with which she was beset, so as to present a clear contrast in her reformed state to her condition under the monarchy, a plausible argument might have been thence derived by restless spirits for the expediency of a similar experiment in Ireland, where many of the



alleged grounds of discontent were analogous to those that had been urged by the French people. Had she secured tranquillity and contentment within her community,—had she placed public credit on a firmer basis, or effected a diminution in the sufferings and the miseries of the lower classes,—had she, finally, wrought an amelioration in the tone of public morality, and elevated the standard of national virtue,—even reflecting men here might have deemed it worthy of grave consideration whether similar means might not produce similar effects, and calmly await, if not designedly further, the issue of a struggle which might possibly secure such brilliant results. I say there are selfish, cool, and calculating minds, which would be quite ready to dismiss considerations of principle and loyalty, and entertain the abstract question of gain or loss, without much scruple on the score of political ethics.

Fortunately for us, in France not a single item in the list of anticipated benefits was realized; and, lest there should be any mistake in the matter, the people of Paris, driven to desperation, proclaimed *their* opinion of the advantage of revolution, by rising in a body *against the revolutionists*, and cutting their throats right and left.

It is wonderful what a number of waverers that affair set right in this country. It was by no means a pleasant idea for the complacent and comfortable “Repealer” here, who, disgusted at the idea of England having happened to be geographically larger

than Ireland, and determined, if he could, at least to belong to the *head-quarters* of a nation, had fomented for years those discontents which in his mind only deserved notice as they pointed to ultimate separation; it was, I say, by no means agreeable to such an individual to behold the future of Ireland rehearsed in France, and reflect that the beginning of the second act might see him metamorphosed from the triumphant opponent of past institutions into the trembling defender of new ones, having that very class which he had made use of and thought to cast away as the scaffolding in his ascent, now ranked and arrayed against him, with the overwhelming moral argument in their favour, that he himself had taught them their strength, and enjoined them to use it recklessly, and for their own purposes.

Hence, the June affair of Paris forced the insurrectionary movement here down into a lower class.

But it did more. *That insurrection was unsuccessful*:—from thence certain inferences were to be drawn.

1. A regular army, provided they are in earnest, will overcome a popular outbreak under the most disadvantageous circumstances. The strongest barricades in the strongest city (for such purposes) in the world, cannot resist scientific attack.

2. In this country, the army being imperial, even revolution could not command, for a length of time, the services of a disciplined veteran military force.

3. In a counter-revolution here, the existing Go-

vernment could not assert its authority by any means proportioned to those brought to bear on the movement which took place in Paris in June. There, it was the National Guards from the country which alone enabled the Provisional Government to make head against the insurgents.

4. Hence, a counter-revolution here *might be expected to be successful*.

It is wonderful how rapidly such considerations flash through the minds of men who will be implicated in the consequences. Never spoken, scarcely acknowledged in the secret heart, they yet unnerve a thousand ready arms, and draw the charges from a thousand furbished rifles. It might be added, too, that the club system, with its machinery of pillage and massacre, deriving countenance as it did from the example of the red-republicans, tended to draw off many, from motives of personal terror, who would not have been deterred so easily if there was no chance of their being themselves, in the progress of events, enrolled amongst the victims of that atrocious system.

The June affair in Paris, then, was our next piece of "luck."

Here the stone had been set rolling, however; and to stop it now was beyond the power, even if it was within the contemplation, of the insurrectionary council. A fresh leader was recognised,—the best that could be had, though not the best that might be wished. A gentleman of birth, education, and property,—more



than respectable in his attainments, connexions, manners, and position,—possessing all the necessary qualifications for the honourable post he occupied, as representative in Parliament for an extensive county,—of blameless private character, and a conscientious and sincere Protestant,—such was the person pitched upon. That such a man should have lent himself to the designs of a desperate and unprincipled faction, with whom he could have had scarcely a feeling or propensity in common, and from whom his very manners and associations naturally dissevered him, is only to be accounted for by one circumstance,—he happened to be descended from—though he was not the representative of—the last of the Irish independent princes; and this accident of birth, working upon a constitutionally vain and ambitious temperament, had induced a monomania, running upon the idea that the royal dignities of his ancestors were destined to be reinstated in his person. His whole history shows (and indeed is only explained by the supposition) that he was—shall we say, *is*?—the man of one idea. The crown of Munster filled up the entire space usually assigned to the intellectual faculties; it hung between his eye and every object, like the image of the sun when we have looked too long upon it; and while it fascinated and amused him by its magnificence, served to blind him at once to the reality of his duties and the delusiveness of his hopes. His whole existence was an hallucination. He evidently thought he had a star,—and probably consulted it.

Certainly, he took counsel of nothing less astrological and uncommunicative. And this clears up much which would otherwise be a mystery. It is a clue to his whole career;—it reconciles his worst inconsistencies;—it explains his stepping out of a sphere which might have satisfied any ordinary ambition, and which he might have occupied with credit, if not adorned,—his deafness to argument, and rejection of moderation or compromise,—his apparent countenance of measures which his whole nature must have revolted from,—his seeming adoption of principles under which the very nobility of his blood would have disqualified his person,—the almost comic gratuitousness of that startling display in the House of Commons, in which the calmness and complacency of the man while uttering such tremendous sentiments, must have reminded the hearers of that memorable freak, in which Garrick recited tragedy with his hands pinned to his sides, while Goldsmith moved his abbreviated arms in grotesque action from behind him,—his open appearance in the provinces *en grand tenue* as a chieftain, with a walking-stick for a baton and a few ragamuffins for an army:—everything which excites our wonder, compassion, or mirth in his career, is to be explained by the one circumstance:—his horoscope had informed him that the scion of the house of Inchiquin was to be King William-Smith the First !

Ill-fated gentleman ! To see him hustled to justice as a criminal was almost too melancholy a spec-

tacle for justice itself to bear. I know and feel that those who were obliged by paramount considerations of public policy to cut short his career, were perhaps those most keenly affected by the doom he had drawn upon himself.

But each and every of the circumstances I have detailed were so many guarantees for the failure of the cause he had espoused.

What the disaffected masses wanted was a peasant like themselves,—a man *of*, as well as *for* the people,—a Masaniello—a Tell—a Hofer—a Toussaint. They wanted a new O'Connell, with all his ability, all his nationality, all his catholicity, all his strength, and more than his courage ; a man whom they could at once love and fear,—worship, in short.

O'Brien had not a single personal point of union with the Irish people.

But all the energies of the Irish peasantry are reserved for objects of personal veneration.

Hence we were “in luck” when O'Brien was recognised as the rebel chief.

Such as he was, however, he took the field. He had been powerfully aided by the efforts of a Press which with unexampled perseverance and ability had stimulated the movement and bolstered the character of its leader. “Who dares to say he will not follow where O'Brien leads ?” was the language of the *suppressed Nation*.

One thing was clearly seen:—the advantageous issue of the first collision, whatever it might be, would be the signal for a general rising, and of course in-



sure the immediate formation of an insurgent army. It was therefore of the very last importance to *succeed* in whatever attempt was earliest made. O'Brien knew this, and as he had his choice of time, place, and enemy, it was to be expected that he might easily secure the first victory at all events.

Accordingly, a singularly favourable opportunity presented itself. A small force of police, which was to have formed part of a combined movement, by some over-eagerness of the officer in command had approached the place of rendezvous before the appointed time. In a lonely district, far from any assistance, this handful of men found itself hemmed in by a body, such as it was, of rebels, so overwhelmingly superior in numbers, that no discipline, plan, or courage, could avail to make resistance effectual for any length of time in an open country.

They accordingly retreated on the nearest place of shelter they could descry, having neither time nor opportunity to "choose a position."

But, *as luck would have it*, they happened upon a little fortress in the wilderness ! Probably their own barracks would not have proved so strong and tenable a place as the widow Cormack's "castle and bawn." I need not enter upon a narrative which has been dinned into everybody's ears. O'Brien and his army were beaten off,—and the rebellion was at an end !

This was a very "lucky" circumstance indeed.

And here a topic suggests itself,—a topic, perhaps, of all that I could enumerate, the most important.

I had conceived that the alternative I had offered in a former publication, under one or the other term of which the pen of history would have to include the conduct of the most influential body of men in this country, was not to be escaped from.

Events have shown that I was mistaken. I have no desire to involve myself in the consequences of discussing a matter of the kind. Let me therefore content myself with hinting my opinion as to the ultimate policy of that conduct. It was a maxim of Napoleon's, the greatest general of his own or perhaps any other age,—a maxim adopted by Wellington in the Peninsula, and fortified by examples at Rossbach, Salamanca, and Boyalva,—that *flank movements within reach of the enemy are rash and injudicious*.

I might add, as our last piece of "luck," the Government of the country having fallen when it did into the hands of our present Viceroy. But on this head I shall have more to say by and by.

I think it will be admitted that fortune has been on our side. I defy any one to show one favourable circumstance of an unexpected nature, or beyond the control of the parties, marking the career of insurrection in Ireland this year.

Now, although I should probably find it a hard matter to convince the sceptical section of our school of disaffection, I must at least expect to have conscientious believers in natural and revealed religion of all creeds and parties with me, when I assert that *there*

*is no such thing as "luck,"* considered as an element influencing natural events. Let the careless infidel sneer, or the discontented casuist explain matters away as he will, still no man who acknowledges an overruling Providence will dare to assert that a single incident in the world's history, from the minutest trifle which passes over unobserved even by the bystander, to the grandest event that shakes nations, happens by chance, or without its design.

Nay, more,—he must admit that human events are carried forward by a design which is at once wise in its operation and beneficent in its intention ; that the general good of the great human family is its scope ; and that it is intended that man should be able to recognise its wisdom, justice, and propriety.

I cannot anticipate, at least, that the conscientious Roman Catholic will for an instant question the truth which lies at the root of his religion in common with all Christian creeds, or that he will refuse to acknowledge that the events of this momentous year, as those of every other since the world first emerged from the darkness of eternity, have been swayed by an irresistible Providence for some purposes, the ultimate tendency of which is the benefit of mankind in general.

In this view, then, I repeat, history is indeed instructive. We discover providential agencies mixing, like Homer's gods, with the strife of men, and observe the most casual circumstances co-operating



with the most important, to illustrate the laws of eternal justice.

It is instructive; because, while it is calculated on the one hand to check the presumption which would ascribe *success* to *means* in an unqualified sense, on the other, it inspires confidence in the means we actually use, as long as they are directed to the attainment of objects which help to carry out the dispensations of an overruling power.

And this brings us to the other side of the question. Acts, in the long run, succeed in proportion to the skill with which they are performed. In other words, natural effects proceed in general from natural and ascertainable causes. And in this view I am ready to make the arguer a present of his "luck." Fortune is admitted, even by its worshippers, to be a fickle goddess.

Nullum numen habes, si sit prudentia: Nos te,  
Nos facimus, Fortuna, Deam, cœloque locamus.

I know that there is many a wretch now grinding in secret disappointment over his rusting pike-head, who comforts himself with the reflection,—“we shall have better luck the next time.”

I never knew a gambler who had lost his money, who did not complain of his “luck.”

Yet it is well known that skill, even in gambling, will in the long run command success; because while chance, as it is called, is an element which is essentially capricious, and cannot rest permanently

with either party, skill, on the contrary, is a permanent quality ; therefore, in any encounter in which art is applied to fortuitous combinations, the results will vary with the degree of art brought to the contest.

Hence, what is popularly called “luck” generally runs with the best player.

Now, subordinately to what must be considered as providential in the occurrences of this year, it was a game of skill, in which the energies of both parties were taxed to the uttermost.

And it is on this account that I have taken care to introduce the circumstance of Lord Clarendon having been appointed to the viceroyalty of Ireland when he was, amongst the fortunate accidents of the juncture. Had his policy been a weak, vacillating, temporizing, or timorous policy, things might have turned out very differently from what they did.

It would be easy to show, by a re-enumeration of the events which concurred for our advantage, that those very circumstances might, if they had been unskilfully used, have strengthened the hands of the adverse party.

Had Lord Clarendon faltered, or exhibited impatience or irritability of temper,—had he mistimed his acts,—had he recognised religious distinctions in political matters,—had he armed the citizens of Dublin,—or confided in its corporation,—or distrusted the police force,—all might have been lost : “luck” would have deserted us.

I have judged it needful to dwell upon these details, not as a mere study for the politician or moralist, but to re-assure the public mind, which, in spite of the grand results of this year's struggle, is deeply depressed as it looks forward to Ireland's future prospects.

How this country shall be materially regenerated,—how the chief reforms she now wants, reforms in the habits and condition of the population,—may be best promoted, it is not the province of a nameless scribe to point out. A word I have said, indeed, on a former occasion, to the people, in the way of advice. I addressed them, because I thought a little common sense kindly spoken might really help them in their endeavours to better their condition. But to the upper and middle classes, it is the philosopher, the statesman, and the divine, who must address themselves didactically. The deepest wisdom, the most venerable experience, the most exemplary philanthropy, may here find full exercise ; the social soil of Ireland is rich enough to repay any amount of skill and labour that could be employed upon it.

The humble task I have now been fulfilling is to encourage you, the good and loyal subjects of Her Majesty around me, by reminding you that the circumstances that have inspired gratitude for the past should suggest hope for the future ; and that it is weakness to allow the miseries you deplore either to tempt you, by the slightest recognition of revolution, to “fly to others that you know not of,”—or to trans-



fix you in despair, like landsmen in a sinking ship, to await the catastrophe your exertions might help to avert.

In France, indeed, the Dictator under the new republic,—that is, *the Autocrat of Freedom*,—deemed it expedient expressly to call forth the energies of the pamphleteer. It would be something ludicrous, if it were not melancholy, to see a power thrown up by the seething of the cauldron into which the ingredients of the social system had been so recklessly cast, driven to subsidize the talents of the philosopher and political economist for the avowed purpose of imbuing society with right ideas on the elementary principles of that very social polity its own existence practically impugns. Nevertheless it is a fact that General Cavaignac lately called upon the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences to teach the people of France the alphabet of moral duty; and that, in obedience to the summons, the said Academy has undertaken to issue, “under the authority of its name,” periodical publications, “*in the form of tracts*,” upon all the questions within its province, and especially upon those in any way relating to “*social order*.”

The Academy further sets forth that, “while they preserve the general and elevated character indispensable to the labours of science, to the *Memoirs* of an Academy, these little treatises must be as clear and concise as the matters discussed in them will permit:”—that they will appear at least once a

fortnight, and in parts of from sixty to a hundred pages each.

Moreover, the Academy, in its sitting of Saturday, the 12th of August, 1848, thus approaches General Cavaignac :

“Most accurate was the judgment which discerned that science may aid politics, by addressing to the nations the language of *common sense*.”

Finally, the Academy delivers itself in the following words :

“It will endeavour to enunciate, in energetic but simple language, those fundamental truths upon which every society stands, and which are even still more essential to a democratic than to any other society. A society which dates only from itself, which aspires to cast aside all prejudices, all conventionalities, all fiction, can only be held together by reason ! Such is at this moment the condition of republican France. The first right of the people is the right to the truth !”

The leading tract is from the pen of M. Victor Cousin, and is entitled “Justice and Charity ;” and there are others issued, upon the Right of Property, the Unequal Distribution of Wealth, &c.

Well, Menenius is a private individual, with no academy at his back or dictator at his elbow ; and yet he has both anticipated the French design, and moreover, as he conceives, avoided some mistakes which the Academy and the Academician have alike fallen into.

He has made no effort to render his *Petits Traités* “general” or “elevated,” like a “labour of science,” or an “academic memoir.” He believes that, if he had succeeded in doing so, he would only have restricted their circulation to the class to which they could be of the least use.

And he has taken the very opposite course to that adopted by M. Victor Cousin, in his pamphlet of “Justice and Charity ;” for whereas the French philosopher has thought it needful to set out by teaching man how he is “great in his intellect and in his liberty,”—how he is “nobler than the universe,” and so forth,—Menenius, on the contrary, has taken it for granted that man’s own nature has given him quite enough of instruction on this head, and has accordingly confined himself to the rather more needful task of reminding him how narrow, after all, is this boasted intellect of his,—how inappreciably small is the fragment of liberty he can, at the best, call his own.

Under that great and comprehensive Code, of which all others ought to be the reflection, man has a duty as regards his neighbour, viz., to do as he would be done by,—but none enjoined towards himself ; and the reason is obvious: because Nature had forestalled all positive codes by implanting the principles of pride and selfishness in the human breast, which will always prove sufficient to neutralize any danger to man’s proper dignity and true interests that could be apprehended from the influence of moral teaching.



What a stinging commentary on the *nouveau regime* is this dictatorial attempt at the duodecimo regeneration of a demoralized nation ! “ A society [of political fanatics] can only be held together by reason !” And lo ! a two-penny tract ! “ We have lured you across the threshold of duty, and blown up the home of your habits behind you ;—here is a brick, begin to build again !” When a witty countryman of ours once taunted the minister of the day with the fraudulent arrangement of his political balance-sheet, he made him read one of the items of the account thus : “ I have involved you in a war with Tippoo Saib ;—here, take your candles a halfpenny cheaper in the pound !” But this French pamphlet-scheme is worse ; for the discharge is attempted to be made by paper payment secured, exactly as the *assignats* were, upon the very fund on which the robbery was originally committed. If I might parody Byron’s celebrated allusion to Kirke White, it was writing to the goose to respect the rights of property, with a quill feloniously abstracted from her own wing !

No,—a government, to dare to dictate morals to a people, must exhibit the principles of true morality in its origin, character, and constitution. Whatever the Academy might have thought proper to do authoritatively in that sacred cause, ought to have been its own spontaneous act. Its ostensible sanction to these tracts goes for nothing, so long as the fact remains upon its minutes, that it steps forth in

defence of social order at the nod of a military despot, who owes his own elevation to the dethronement of his king, and the demoralization of his country. Better, far better, the free strictures of the dreaded "Timon," the Vicomte de Cormenin, who lies in wait, like a lion-ant, for the successive slips of these self-constituted patriots. Where no one has exhibited principle enough to inculcate principle without hypocrisy, it is well that unprincipled persons should know, at least, that a rod hangs over them.

It is time to turn from France, with its vain-glorious degradation, its self-complacent misery, its practical licentiousness, and its theoretic virtues. Sermons may be read in stones; the strange conglomerate made up of the *debris* of so many former political systems has proved a homily for us. We may now, with our judgments purified by the lesson, return to matters nearer home.

I have said that it exhibits weakness as well as profligacy, to urge forward the violent subversion of society, in order to get at the bottom of admitted evils. This proposition, although it has been held to admit of exceptions, is nevertheless considered true as a rule. The chief exception is generally stated to be the case of a nation lying powerless in the hands of a despotism, without a constitution. But it has been further questioned whether, even with a constitution and a form of freedom, a people in a

depressed condition may not plead such condition as a justification of the forcible endeavour to create for itself a constitution more likely to advance its interests, once it has failed in obtaining its ends through the ordinary and recognised channels.

Now, as to the first case, it is fortunately not necessary to enter upon it, since none but men who are determined not to be convinced in the usual way on any subject, attempt to assert that it is ours. The figurative terms, "slaves," "tyrants," "despots," "serfs," "hereditary bondsmen," &c., fade before the light of argument, as the Bear, the Scorpion, and the Hydra of the heavens resolve themselves into less terrific combinations under the simplest processes of scientific inquiry.

But there is more in the latter class of exceptions; especially as the language in which they are stated is itself vague and of various import. "Constitution," "liberty," "people,"—there are scarcely any terms less settled; but it would be so dry a task to set about drawing lines and fixing definitions, that I should dismiss the topic at once, but that I think the whole question may be argued on higher grounds than any which involve a necessity for such strictness, because upon grounds of general expediency and of principle,—two abstractions which, in my estimation, necessarily go hand in hand one with the other.

I have studied a good deal of what has been written and spoken on that comprehensive subject, "the



Irish Question," from the dry debates of the House to the poetical effusions of the "*Nation*" school: and it strikes me that the principal argument our malcontents rely upon, resolves itself into this syllogism. —Misgovernment has a natural tendency to produce pauperism and discontent; but the Irish are discontented paupers; therefore, Irish pauperism and discontent are produced by misgovernment.

The logician knows how at once to expose the fallacy of such reasoning. To make the conclusion legitimate, he will tell you you must alter your "major premiss," as it is technically termed,—that is, the first proposition—into this,—*all* pauperism and discontent are produced by misgovernment; which would be a *petitio principii*, i. e., begging the question, or assuming the very point at issue.

For I do join issue with the disaffected party on this ground. I say that there may be another cause, or a combination of various causes, for poverty and its attendant discontent, beside that of misgovernment; and that it were easy to prove this, in theory and by example.

But there is a further element in the inquiry, which seems to be left out by the common consent of these sophists. They would have us forget, that although past misgovernment may account for what we are, *including* our poverty and discontent, nothing short of present misgovernment can be admitted as an argument for the necessity of radical change. Indeed Mr. Holmes's laboured proofs of Great Britain's mis-

taken policy in former times have a tendency to defeat the main proposition he would himself base upon them. Because, if they hold good, they point to the causes of what is charged against the Present, in the irrevocable Past; and thus altogether remove the objection to a present policy derivable from the actual present condition of the country. Everybody admits that the restoration of social prosperity amongst a people must at all times, and under the most favourable circumstances, be extremely gradual; and every one likewise admits, that the state of this country has latterly been such as to render it absolutely impossible that it could have advanced appreciably in wealth or civilization under any political system. From hence it follows, that if Mr. Holmes be right,—and I am not now going to impugn his facts,—if the policy of England towards this country was indeed uniformly a repressive policy;—considering that such a policy must have produced fruits calculated to survive its own existence;—recollecting too how slow is the process of national regeneration;—and finally, observing that individual influences and natural causes combine at the present moment to check any forward movement:—I say, it follows on Mr. Holmes's own showing, that we should be particularly cautious how we allow appearances to sway our judgment as to governmental policy in dealing with Ireland; for since mischief enough is assumed to have been done in old times to account for all the misery and ill-humour we see,

nobody has a right to pronounce sentence against the Present on the evidence of that poverty and discontent alone.

There is much, after all, in the temper with which a past policy is reviewed. Mr. Macaulay, for instance, in his new history, sometimes bears nearly as hard upon England for its English misrule, as Mr. Holmes for its Irish.

I could easily show that, in spite of everything, we *have* advanced. Certainly up to 1844 our progress was steady and decided. But it should be borne in mind that the continuation of misery, or even its increase, cannot always be taken as decisive evidence against the wisdom displayed by a Government in its policy, or of a legislative body in its enactments. It must be ascertained how much of that misery, or of its aggravation, is to be laid to the two obstructing influences already adverted to, before we can pronounce an opinion upon the positive propriety of particular measures. For unless the effect of those measures shall prove more than counteractive of the depreciating influences, the result of the two, acting upon a people, will still fail to elevate its condition. If the possibility of such a case be conceded,—that is, if it be admitted that an unlimited amount of agitation, promoted by individuals for an indefinite length of time, will neutralize a wise policy, and that a visitation of Providence may cause starvation and consequent discontent in the most prosperous country,—then I have gained my point,—we are not in all



cases to decide the question of good or bad government by the condition of the people or by popular manifestations at any particular juncture. Recollect, I admit pauperism and discontent to be *primâ facie* evidence of misgovernment ; but evidence capable of being rebutted by a fair exposition of the whole case. If on the one hand we find measures of a tendency admittedly beneficial—adopted, moreover, in compliance with the demands of the people—following each other in an uninterrupted succession year after year ;—and if, on the other, we observe agitation pursued as a trade, until the demoralization of the people is as complete as the corruption of the system by which it is carried on ;—if we see a population, thus jaundiced and thus disabled, struck by a natural visitation, which turns poverty into starvation, and discontent into despair ;—if, I say, we take in at one comprehensive glance both sides of the picture, shall we not see occasion to hesitate before we pronounce the one misgovernment, and the other the evidence of it ?

Any man of plain common sense will perceive that legislation for Ireland must, as she stands at present, be carried on without the hope of immediately satisfying the requirements of any one class of the sufferers. The famishing masses will be content with nothing less than a general resumption and redistribution of property ; while the landlords, whose means of subsistence fail with the ruin of their tenants, and who are called upon to support them exactly at the time when they cannot

support themselves, naturally refuse to “die and make no sign.” Yet it is the duty of a Legislature to avoid being carried away by the discontent of either class, in its deliberations for the general advantage of the community. And the reason is this, that it must not satisfy one complainant by doing injustice to the other. It should not rob Peter to pay Paul. It must work with the materials it finds to hand; it can create no new ones. Parliament — or Government — is nothing more than ourselves, in our legislative or executive capacity, dealing with our own resources for our own benefit. That is, it is the aggregate of the *selves* of the community, prescribing for each individual the conduct he ought of his own accord to adopt, if his mind were capable of viewing his own position, and that of others, from a sufficient elevation.

Well, then, since legislation and government may have become good, and yet misery and discontent survive from an earlier *regime* amongst a people,—since, in the case of Ireland, the measures of government have of late years been admittedly conciliatory and concessive, while the misery and discontent may be accounted for—the one by a natural visitation, the other by pernicious teaching,—it follows that the whole of the arguments of Mr. Holmes and his friends, so far as they are based upon the present material and moral aspect of this country, must fall to the ground.

But the conclusions drawn from such reasoning enter, as premises, into the argument for revolution.

With the subversion of the original argument, then, the question of the absolute necessity for change is also disposed of.

Let us, however, assume bad government, in any community where a form of liberty exists,—and even there a violent political convulsion is *impolitic*. “The time, we trust, is coming,” says an *Edinburgh Reviewer*, “though it may be yet distant, when nations will discover by a comprehensive historic *induction*, that armed revolutions, wherever there is the shadow of a constitutional government, are *never likely to pay*.” That is, revolution is unwise, considered as a matter of expediency. The benefits it proposes are not attained, or not best attained, by its means. To rouse the masses to rage, because they may have felt just discontent, is, to use the expression adopted by the same writer, “to cast out devils through Beelzebub.”

The reasons why revolution *will not pay* are too various to be entered on here. All government owes its stability in a great measure to the *habit* of obedience in the people. Once this is interrupted, even a good government wants holding-ground in the human heart. The liberty to rebel, achieved against authorities sanctioned by customary reverence and ancient prescription, will be still more lightly exercised against governments of one’s own manufacture. But it is the existence of a *rebellious spirit* in a community that most demoralises society, paralyses speculation, and destroys credit.



And this brings me to what in my estimation is the main question,—the *morality* of revolution.

I know how lax the ideas of mankind are on this head. Perhaps there is no topic on which the ordinary rules of ethics have been more universally set aside, even by persons and parties in other things actuated by a high sense of principle. Revolution is in our day held to be a thing not amenable to ordinary rules. It has some inherent sanctity, or self-justifying power. Revolution in practice, like the king in theory, “can do no wrong.” It is admitted to be a last resort, it is true ; but what circumstances constitute the *ultimatum* of oppression on the one hand, and of endurance on the other, seems to be left to the *issue* of the revolutionary struggle to determine. A revolution is a successful rebellion ; and if the rebellion had not succeeded, the world would have been quite ready to denounce it as such. It is the success that gives to the whole proceeding *ab initio* a new character : it has a retrospective effect, and pronounces the eternal amnesty of posterity in the ears of the victors.

But all this authority will not satisfy me, as long as there is a moral law, paramount, positive, and of universal application. It will not suffice to show me characters in history of undying fame, who have been installed as patriots after the success of revolutions. I boldly look to the morality of their acts at the time they were performed, and refuse to admit

that any change of political circumstances can alter their intrinsic nature. Nor will it suffice to show me the benefits which have accrued to nations from revolution. This does not go an inch towards justifying the deeds, in themselves criminal, which have brought it about. Pestilence thins population, and gives room. The fire of London stopped the plague. But you do not on that account defend the wholesale poisoning of a metropolis, or the act of the incendiary who might set it on fire. Many "patriots," I am convinced, will discover that they will be judged by a more rigid code than that of the historian,—all of them, at least, who, with an option before them, and a "shadow" of freedom to protect them, countenanced an intermediate evil before the achievement of a prospective good. I turn sternly away from the prevailing latitudinarianism, and ask, what is the use of our Christianity? What are the services of a thousand churches intended for? What does the devotion of millions of worshippers mean? Is it all *humbug*, this monstrous, monotonous, costly, and cumbrous machinery of RELIGION? If it be *not*, then there can be little need to argue the matter more at length.

And I go farther. I am convinced, judging by the uniform tenor of providential dispensations, that the very objects proposed and effectuated by forced revolutions, if the veil which hides contingencies were but removed, would be found to be attainable more completely and permanently by means in themselves legitimate. What might not have been

our condition by this time, if the genius and energy of O'Connell and the party he created had been employed in the agitation of industry, honesty, and virtue? In France, where we have had the best means of judging, it is now seen that the atrocities of the first revolution brought their own punishment along with them, and that the phantom of liberty, which enticed the people into lawlessness and crime, eluded the blood-stained grasp that snatched at it. The boasted goddess of Reason was herself the one to refuse happiness to any claim short of virtue. Had that country reformed her religion and her morality before she sought to overthrow the political fabric, she would, I feel confident, have found that fabric at length opening its iron doors, as if at some resistless mandate, for the admission of the excluded classes, and have borne thereout in the end a constitution which might have survived to the present day, a blessing to herself and the admiration of Europe.

The carcasses of those who went out of Egypt whitened the sands of the desert. Not a man who sinned in the wilderness entered the promised land.

My confidence amounts to certainty of this, indeed, that, as far as the individual actor goes, an act of rebellion can never be innocent, as long as any other alternative remains. But such an alternative is supposed always to exist in the case we are considering,—that of a free constitution. Recollect I do not go the length of saying, that forcible resistance to the arbitrary exercise of power can in no case be justi-



fiable ; or, in other words, that revolution must, from its very nature, be criminal. Just as I would avoid pinning myself to the assertion, that there is no exception to the command against killing. I know that the law which forbids murder, justifies homicide under certain circumstances. But I am not driven to enter upon a subtle question of casuistry or of abstract right. On the contrary, I guarded my reasoning at the outset, by restricting it to a class of cases such as may be supposed to include our own ; and I will not allow myself to be drawn into speculations with which I have nothing to do. It is more to the purpose to establish the principle, that a man is seldom in a position to say beforehand how much good an act of equivocal morality may in any case achieve ; and that we can none of us attempt to prove that a greater amount of benefit has been ultimately derived to the human race by any successful civil war, than would have been by a continuance of internal tranquillity. The very effect of the immoral example on the minds of the community, for instance, may have more than neutralized its political value. In this country, let the landlord, the capitalist, the magistrate,—nay, the priest, witness to the *direct* evils of insurrection. Where are the boasted virtues of the O'Connell period, when the "Liberator" preached morality to the people, as temperance is enjoined to a prize-fighter, not for its intrinsic good, but *for the use to be made of it* ? Father Matthew, they say, cannot walk through

the streets of Cork, the head-quarters of his amiable mission, without being shouldered by the inebriated wretches he had pledged to perpetual temperance. So much for agitation. It has done, I am convinced, more to degrade, brutalize, unchristianize, the Irish mind, than all the "wrongs" which England is said to have inflicted on this country since the twelfth century.

From all this I infer:

First, That Ireland does not present the aspect of a country in which the necessity for revolution is apparent.

Secondly, That, supposing she did, an armed revolution does not accomplish the objects it sets before it.

Thirdly, That, even if there were a reasonable prospect of attaining the benefits proposed, armed revolution is, under a constitution such as ours, criminal and unjustifiable in the highest degree, and calculated to induce the anger of God.

The farther back we stand from a period, the better we can see its outline and true character. The ear detects the play of the national constitution more accurately by that mediate auscultation in which time is interposed between the examiner and the events. And it is after such comprehensive modes of investigation that the inquirer will best see in history the confirmation of the moral and Christian aphorism, that the laws prescribed to individuals are binding on communities; and as long as it is a crime as regards

man, and a sin as regards God, to steal because we are hungry, or kill because we are exasperated, will forcible spoliation be indefensible under circumstances of public distress, and armed insurrection unjustifiable, even though public discontent should exist.

There is a clue to all this. The true philosopher is able to discern, by an argument *à posteriori*, that the positive enactments of the divine codes of both Testaments are only confirmatory of the pre-existing laws of nature, which by their constitution regulate the happiness of the human race according to its obedience to, or violation of, certain immutable principles connatural with what we call Nature herself. Those codes were given to help man to his own happiness; and obedience to them is rather recommended for his good, than inculcated for his restraint. Just as a general adopts the plan of punishing soldiers who stray beyond the lines, when he apprehends that the enemy will cut off such of his men as they find straggling within their reach.

Do I advocate the doctrine of "passive obedience," and "the divine right of kings?" Whoever remembers the old Tory arguments of the seventeenth century, must acquit me of holding such doctrines. But I maintain the necessity of *active* obedience, and defend the constitutional influence of a limited monarchy like ours.

In such old institutions as coexist with the principle of freedom, but especially in the British, there is a remarkable power of adjustment to the requirements of mankind, without reconstruction. Within the



amplitude of British liberty, a code, a creed, a constitution, may thus become self-adapted to the spirit of the times. England is too vast, too rich, too powerful, too good for a revolution. A free public opinion secures for her what revolution never could. Her constitution does not exist on parchment, or in a charter, like those of France and America. It is a flux, intangible thing. There is nothing fixed in it, but its stability. It is the *lex non scripta* of a nation. England, possessing it, is a vast Windsor Castle, built in the feudal times, but gradually adapted for the modern residence of Imperial Majesty, without the demolition of a single tower of the original structure.

That our constitution is thus plastic, ought to give hopes even to the man who sees no chance for our country except in sweeping political changes. There is scarcely any amount of reform that might not be accomplished in time, peaceably and permanently, by the operation of public opinion.

I am no enemy to reform. On the contrary, I am convinced it is necessary that legislation should be constantly at work to keep pace with the public requirements; and I hold that men ought to bestir themselves in the direction of such improvement.

But I think the great mistake in this country lies here, that the different classes and grades of men do not employ themselves at *that part* of the political machinery which the constitution has intended them to be occupied upon, and which will keep the whole machine in the best working order.

It is clear that it is not either for a nation's prosperity, freedom, or happiness, that every man should be a politician, in the conventional sense of the term. But every man can be, and should be, a politician, within his own sphere, and where the constitution has afforded him an opportunity of being so.

I say, every man can be a politician within his own sphere. What is at the bottom of the prosperity and glory of a country? The industry, intelligence, and integrity of its individual inhabitants. Were *all* industrious, and *all* virtuous, I believe it will be admitted that the nation *must* be great and flourishing.

The political act, then, which *every* man may perform, is to work hard, learn diligently, and live honestly himself, and to encourage knowledge, labour, and probity, to the best of his ability, in those he can influence.

This is what everybody can do, down to the lowest of the low. It is what nobody is exempted from doing, up to the noblest of the noble.

As you ascend from below, or descend from above, there are innumerable intermediate stages, in which the sphere of action is more or less expanded or circumscribed; but in all there are certain points of legitimate contact with the constitution.

The country gentleman has quite enough to do between the fiscal and general business of grand juries, parish business, poor-law business, magisterial business, registration business, and election

business, beside his own business, without busying himself more immediately with the general affairs of the nation.

This is the political business the constitution permits him to perform. It is his duty to perform it well and conscientiously. If he has done so, he is of use to the state.

But what is the case in Ireland? Scarcely a class attends exclusively to its own affairs. Each has a hankering after the concerns of those above it. Our lawyers must be legislators,—or demagogues,—or else grumble at the lot that has chained them to Ireland; our corporation displays the pomposity of a burlesque parliament; our country gentlemen usurp the power and out-do the jobbing of a provincial aristocracy; our “squireens” shoulder themselves up to the magisterial bench and the grand jury room; our shopkeepers and our very farmers affect to spout the politics and poetry of the “*Nation*” with an air of dignity;—every grade of society walks on tip-toe, and stumbles over its own affairs in the effort to reach up to those of its superiors.

This, I venture to affirm, is our grand national mistake,—and everybody might foresee that in such a case the wheels of the constitution could not run smoothly. We are now threatened with beggary, because we were not content to be respectable; and find ourselves involved in rebellion, because we neglected to use our proper influence in the constitution, and then discovered that things did not turn out to our wish.



No form of government will work well, unless you who live under it act so as to give it fair play:—and with a constitution possessing a democratic infusion such as ours, you never would have to complain of Government if you did your own duty. For, after all, what is a free government, but the concentrated power of the social system? If that system be sound,—if society lend itself to carry it out efficiently,—you can no more be afflicted with an unpopular government, than a hale constitution can exhibit wasted muscle, or a pallid cheek. And on the other hand, in a system which works ill, it is not in the power of those who are placed at the head of affairs, no matter how strictly they may perform their duty, either to satisfy the popular demands, or to effect with certainty the good they propose. Disaffection is frequently another form of self-condemnation. We blame the errors of those who publicly exhibit to us the result of our own individual misdoings. We are remiss in our own sphere ; and then complain of those who reflect that remissness in baffled policy and ineffectual legislation.

If the deluded mob, which went shouting for so many years at the heels of O'Connell, learning from him what a wonderfully fine peasantry they were, *and nothing else*, had stayed at home, and, perceiving their own deficiencies, improved their system of agriculture, they might, by the year 1846, have been in a condition to stand the failure of the potato-crop without a famine.

If those country gentlemen, who with inadequate

resources put forward inordinate pretensions, had set about retrenchment and the nursing of their estates when they might have done so with safety and honour, instead of plunging into the gambling speculations of a period of monetary excitement, with the desperate alternative before them of supporting their false position or of ruin, they might have found themselves now strong enough to bear the pressure of the times and pauper support, without breaking down the entire class to which they belong.

If the body of electors in Ireland had, during the last twenty years, looked to the general qualifications of the candidates for seats in Parliament, instead of returning anybody, no matter whom, who would pledge himself on a particular question of no practical utility, rendering himself in fact the tool of a faction by which the true interests of Ireland were every day frittered away in intrigue, cabal, and the game of party, they would have found that their strength in the Imperial Parliament was sufficient for all the purposes of our country, and, in fact, irresistible in any serious effort; and there would not, at this time of day, exist that ignorance of Irish affairs in the house, which is attributable partly to the meagerness of information possessed by the Irish members themselves, but principally to that want of confidence in information derived from Irish sources which unhappily apathizes the earnestness of British inquirers.

All this is, I believe, felt very generally by well-disposed and impartial persons. It is the rough good sense which runs about the streets ;—and yet I am surprised that it is not more generally perceived how the present condition of the country necessarily flows, as effect from cause, from circumstances ascertainable, and independent of good or bad government, the Union, the “Church grievance,” or any other popular subject of discontent. Landlords whose fathers minced up their estates into morsels in order to create a parliamentary influence, now naturally complain of a superabundant population and over-division. The masses of the peasantry, who for years poured their superfluous earnings into the coffers of a central association, which promised them everything they ought never to expect, and nothing which they might reasonably look for,—now at last awakened to the delusiveness of those promises, but not disabused as to their absurdity,—smitten by a visitation against which their own fruitless expenditure had left them no resource,—are now, as a matter of course, so much unresisting material in the hands of the incendiary and political conspirator. The manufactures of the towns, and their shopkeeping and trading interests, necessarily droop beneath the influence of an unceasing agitation, amounting to a system of terrorism, which frightens away capital, and discourages free and frequent expenditure. Each plan devised by Government for purposes of local or general economy is



neutralized and rendered abortive by the jobbing of intermediate agents ; and then there is, as might be expected, a cry of clumsy machinery, or inadequate grants. The course of justice is systematically opposed by the great body of the people, and its administration impugned by men who assume to be their leaders ; and, as a natural consequence, the law frequently appears to work feebly, and its tribunals become objects of contempt. The minds of the bulk of the people are placed out at nurse with lay or secular brains-carriers, who take care, while they receive the wages of good service, to spoon-feed them with such intellectual aliment alone as suits their own interested objects. The result of which is, naturally again, that all the efforts of the state and of general civilization to enlighten them, with a view to their own benefit and advancement, are rejected : —distrust, discontent, and disaffection alone remaining on the national stomach.

It is far from being agreeable to me to be obliged to speak so plainly. But I cannot do otherwise. This is no time for trifling. We are passing through a crisis scarcely less momentous than that of rebellion. The day of reckoning must come. With the meeting of Parliament these are topics that will be in everybody's mouth ; we shall have startling innovations discussed on their merits,—sweeping retrenchments suggested as feasible. I firmly believe that no changes short of such social ones as shall give a new position to whole grades will be comprehensive

enough. We must “drop a class,” in fact, as they say in the University. The landlord must, under ordinary circumstances, become the practical agriculturist; the shopkeeper, his own foreman; and the lofty politician of the bar, the laborious and unostentatious legal drudge, like his brother in London. There is nothing else for it. *Retrenchment of position* is inevitable. We shall be no worse than the corresponding class in England, or anywhere else. *We shall occupy our right place.* Some court-suits will be to be sold, no doubt; and certainly a whole “Dycer’s” of carriages and horses must be brought to the hammer. But the thing **MUST** be done. If it be not——

The alternative I am unwilling to supply.

There are two classes of philosophers who undertake to make predictions concerning the destiny of mankind.

One is your perfectionist. Under various names he has been of late pursuing his experiments over the explosive retorts of modern society, in hopes to reform the age, and by his cunning theories and mystic influences transmute it into that golden one in which misery will be unknown,—and *he* known.

This personage is always discontented in proportion to the strength of his hallucination. Amused by the idea of a Utopia, he chafes at the tardiness or blindness of men who wish to preserve the continuity of the past, instead of *beginning anew*, on his

plan. You will always find him in the forefront of any change; for he deems a radical one the best preliminary, and believes that to resolve society into its constituent molecules is to render it the more susceptible of that new crystallization, under which its true lustre and beauty will come out most strongly. With him, Nature—or Providence—has made a mistake from the beginning of the world. Whole lachrymatories of unnecessary tears have been shed; whole hecatombs of sacrifices needlessly offered to erroneous systems and creeds; whole mausoleums of human hearts gratuitously broken over the failure of hopes that might, under his theories, have been realized in a moment. It remains, he believes, for him to discover the true principle of light—the dream of the Rosicrucian. Armed with these potent convictions, he looks upon the struggles of the politician and the labours of the historian as alike contemptible,—the one being engaged in raking out the ruins of the past, for the other to misconstruct the future of.

The other is your man of the world. With him the attempt at improvement is a subject of laughter. He has stored his memory with facts which prove the petty, disgraceful, or unforeseen causes that have produced the greatest events. He can tell you that it was the Earl of Wiltshire's dog, which bit His Holiness's toe stretched forth for its master to kiss, that caused the Reformation. He will find you the selfishness of the most generous action,—the foibles of the noblest character. He will put his finger on an in-



consistency in the career of the purest statesman and patriot. His sagacity of evil is astonishing. I know men, and men of ability too, who are thorough sportsmen in this way ; whose noses can track out the doubling of the politician with the precision of a harrier, though their very attitude prevents them, all the time, from obtaining a prospect of the country they are going over.

A man of this mould, when he comes to prophesy, has little to say that can cheer us. And, as the former class are for unlimited innovation, calculating with sanguine zeal on the development of new systems and the march of ideas, he adheres as steadily to received institutions, from the malign conviction that if theories be various, human nature is the same; and that as long as men are to be the actors on the scene, passions, prejudices, follies, whims, and inconsistencies will influence human events, pretty much as they have done from the beginning of the world.

Between these two extremes the calm and contemplative observer will discern the true perspective of human society. He will be ready to admit that as long as the world lasts the nature of man will remain in kind the same it has ever been, and that each generation as it springs up will exhibit its own share of ignorance, absurdity, rashness, and depravity. He will concede that the impress of individual minds will continue from time to time to stamp itself upon national character, moulding it into unforeseen, unwelcome, and uncouth forms. He will count upon

the occasional failure of the best devised systems, and realize to himself the spectacle of political and social anomalies hereafter confounding, as they have done through successive ages, the calculations of the scholar, statesman, and philosopher.

But he will also see that, as time advances, and the truths of nature and revelation unfold themselves to the world, there is a progressive advance, by which a steady gain is secured to man, in virtue and happiness. The philosophical examination of history will enable him to discriminate between the successive rush and retreat of the waves of opinion, and the permanent making of the tide of truth upon the shores of society ; and, encouraged by the survey, he will contemplate without terror junctures such as the present, in which what seemed the blue and beautiful swell as it advanced, has broken in froth and bubbles upon the moles of ancient institutions, drawing back in ruin what it reached in strength. The fabric, he feels, which was not substantial enough to stand the shock, might “pass unbewailed away;” while what deserved to constitute the boundary between permanency and change,—between the Past and the Future,—he stands upon unmoved—he knows it will hold its ground.

And he sees better times before him. Out of the chaos he perceives order to advance ; not by a miracle, or in the twinkling of an eye, or in celestial perfection,—but with a measured and solemn march to some consummation, the amount or period of

which he dares not conjecture, though he can argue its certainty with the confidence of an unshaken faith.

A happy belief, this, for Irishmen ! A creed which, as by a sunbeam, dispels the gloomy superstition of the revolutionist, who, turning his back upon the whole system of providential truth, would immolate to the idols he has set up those virtues, without which paradise itself to him would prove a wilderness.

The real principle of progress may be illustrated by that noble image of Schiller's, in which forcible revolution is likened to the track of the cannon-ball, —unswerving, breaking through every obstacle, but having its goal in ruin;—while the path of legitimate reform is made to resemble the course of the stream, pursuing its way onward by a gentle and winding course, respecting ancient boundaries, passing the corn-field and vineyard only to fertilize them, and bearing the blessings of earth to the bosom of the ocean.

For my part, I will not allow myself to despond for a moment. I see hope for nations as well as for individuals, flowing from the same eternal sources. I realize to myself the gradual diminution of social misery, strife, and crime. Premature as I believe the efforts of those well-meaning persons to be, who are seeking to bind communities by pledges of international amity, I yet trust that posterity may see the day when their benevolent intentions shall be carried out by the common and tacit consent of mankind.



Nothing but public opinion will ever form the true *sanction* of such pledges ; and public opinion is the aggregate of the opinions of individuals. When opinion shall have become consentaneous, or nearly consentaneous, on this head, it will need no pledge to enforce the observance of its enactments. The gate will open without effort, when the sluices have filled the lock to the level. The remark of Isaac Taylor is true, in the certainty of its conclusion, as well as in the vagueness of its period :

“ It is now within the prospect of the human family to constitute, not indeed one political structure, but one family, cherishing peace from a sense of interest and a sense of justice, and mutually promoting the advance one of another, as the surest means of prospering socially. Intercourse and combination must be the ultimate condition of those who are by nature capable of society. Insulation and variance are unnatural, and must be temporary.”

This is, I repeat, a happy reflection for Irishmen. God forbid that we should see the Union repealed ! That, indeed, would be a step in the wrong direction. I consider the new theory of the ultimate “ union of races ” a complete fallacy, even if it applied to the case of these countries. The fact of the natural tendency of civilization and intercommunication being to break down national clanship, itself overthrows it. No barrier is stronger in savage life than that of race ; no division less perceptible, and more in the way, in cultivated communities. Here, at all events, such a re-

version is impossible. As the English are mixed up of Britons, Saxons, Danes, and Normans, so are the Irish a compound of races, some of them separate at the time of the English invasion, and some of English and Scotch origin; so much so, that in few parts of the country does the pure blood now remain, and is scarcely ever found in the veins of those who clamour most loudly for its claims. The vast majority of the men who cry out for a distinctive nationality founded on race, are either thorough-bred Englishmen if you go back a few generations, or a mongrel breed, in which the wilder part may claim a Milesian origin, but the superior portion holds undeniable relation to the Saxon. I consider no folly more daring or more mischievous than this of attempting to lay at Nature's door the dissociability of jealousy, prejudice, and barbarism. It is a folly akin to impiety, for it impliedly contravenes the sacred oracles, which declare the genealogical as well as social brotherhood of the whole human race. And besides it is unphilosophical. Nobody can assert, as a principle, the impossibility of the union of races, who does not also assert the impossibility of their common origin; and the student knows that the whole tendency of ethnology, as a modern science, is to confirm the popular and scriptural belief on such original unity.

To tear Ireland from England now would be to cause a hemorrhage fatal to the very existence of both. Who shall undertake to mark off the portions

to be assigned to each ? What Shylock shall cut the pound of flesh from the heart of the Empire ? The geographical boundaries have long ceased to represent any ethnical ones. Why should they, the most arbitrary and obsolete of all, be had recourse to to designate the political ones ? You are seven hundred years too late. The imaginary line must now pass beneath every house, over every field, through every churchyard. It must wind from the remotest provinces of the one country to the inmost centre of the other, and become entangled in the wheels of institutions and the ties of families. It is a demarcation which must be disputed inch by inch. To accomplish it, you must not only cut through the most solid materials, but lacerate the most sensitive. The blood which would flow from the bodies of those who would have to fight the matter out would be nothing compared to that wrung from the hearts of the millions implicated in the issue of the strife.

No ! you cannot wrest Ireland out of the embrace of England. Call it tyranny, injustice,—what you please,—to hold her fast. You will be wiser some day or other, and bitterly repent that you had ever tried to promote the separation.

The Union must be maintained a little longer, by all means,—*and then it will maintain itself.*

Scotland, at the beginning of the last century, went through stages in some measure analogous to ours ; and the case of Scotland was precisely similar to that of Ireland ; for it made no difference whatever to



the Scots, the circumstance that James I. of England had been James VI. of Scotland. What she lost by the Union was her "Domestic Legislature." That and its consequences is what she complained of; and such is what the "Repealers" complain of here. She was indignant, eloquent, and plausible, just as we have been. One of her orators was highly commended when he compared the forced amalgamation (and it *was* forced) to the composition of the toes of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, of which the brass and clay were joined without uniting, and accordingly broke into pieces with the first violence.

But Scotland found in time that her real good had been promoted by that measure, and that her interest lay in maintaining it,—and accordingly she is content.

So shall we be, by-and-by.

Some of my readers may remember to have witnessed a remarkable phenomenon in looking down from one of the most celebrated fortresses of Germany upon the Rhine, which flows past the foot of the cliff on which it is built.

The river is distinctly divided into three parallel streams, of unequal width and of different colours, flowing side by side without mingling. In the middle runs the Rhine itself. On the further side is the Moselle, which has just joined the main stream. On the near side flows the Lahn, also a tributary, though an earlier one, to the parent river. As far as the eye can reach they continue distinct, but a knowledge of the laws regulating fluid bodies would

enable the observer, even if he were otherwise ignorant, to argue with certainty that this anomaly would cease, and that the amalgamation would be at last complete.

In the triple union of these countries the unchangeable law of civilization points, in like manner, to the ultimate interpenetration of the masses of the several populations flowing in the same channel, that is, equally free under the same government.

And, as in the case of the river, so in our own, the riches borne upon the surface of the waters promise to be greatest when they have most thoroughly combined.

Agitation for the avowed purpose of separation is plugged up for the present. But disaffection is oozing out at fresh crannies. And, what is the worst of it, it has appeared in quarters from whence it ought to have been least expected. I can readily understand the growl of disappointed treason. I can both comprehend and feel for the complaints of suffering classes, whether landlords or peasantry, still importunately urged. But that it should be asserted by those who once affected to lead the loyalty of the country, that the whole of the events of the past year are a sort of Titus Oates' conspiracy, concocted by the parties which pretended to detect it, for interested and corrupt purposes,—and that, to give colour to their views, they should interpret the acidulated pleasantries of certain witty Irish

scribes in a London journal into a deliberate spirit of malignity towards Ireland in the breasts of the British people, is what, I confess, I was not prepared for.

The latter charge, indeed, is almost too contemptible for notice. That much of what has actually passed here lately should provoke a smile upon the face of those whose tears were never yet refused to our sufferings, was to be expected. But does this prove anything? You might as well argue from the woodcuts of the celebrated "Punch" that the Duke of Wellington was an object of universal ridicule to the British nation.

But the former calumny is of a graver complexion.

There is something revolting in the idea of ingratitude, either towards God or man. Even under reverses, the mind naturally turns with kindness to those who have done their best for us. But where consummate skill and indomitable energy have caused a crisis to pass quietly over which might have involved a great empire in ruin,—that the very circumstance of immunity from all outward and public disaster should be construed into evidence of perfidy and collusion on the part of the Government which preserved us, and be made use of to bring that Government and those who administered it into hatred and contempt, exhibits a combination of malignity and infatuation scarcely to be designated by a milder term than madness.

Menenius belongs neither to that class of men



which is moored to the politics of a clique, nor to that which is drifted about by every current of popular opinion. He has hitherto held himself at liberty to think for himself, and has been accordingly exposed to the animadversions successively of almost every recognised party. Indifferent to the sentence of any tribunal less supreme than that of his own conscience, he determined to hold aloof at the time when the death of the lamented Earl of Besborough had placed our present viceroy at the head of affairs in this country, and wait to bestow his confidence in an untried functionary, until he should have materials whereon to ground his reliance.

Thus reserved, he never lent himself to the parade of premature adulation got up in honour of the Earl of Clarendon, on his first assuming the reins of government.

The same independence enables him now to resist the system of depreciation which it seems the fashion to adopt with reference to His Excellency's policy, and fearlessly to commend what he judges worthy of commendation.

Even in his approbation, however, he reserves the right to qualify; and, did it come within the scope of his present purpose, he would boldly point to such passages in the history of this great crisis, as, in his humble judgment, are marked by error or inadvertence on the part of Government.

And, in like manner, were an act to be done to-

morrow, or a word said, calling for reprehension, he would, if it fell within the limits of his subject, unhesitatingly condemn it.

Nor is he one atom more afraid of being charged with arrogance in thus speaking out, than he is of the imputation of partisanship when he defends the measures that have been adopted.

Why do I, an humble individual, presume to scrutinize the acts of a personage in the position of the Lord Lieutenant?

Because his *public* conduct exercises an influence over my affairs. In his private capacity, as a British nobleman of illustrious name and brilliant talents, he is out of my reach, and entitled to protection from the prying curiosity of pamphleteers. The only feeling that can exist in my breast towards the Earl of Clarendon, as such, is respect. And I deferentially refuse to put myself forward either as his supporter, of which he has no need, or as his antagonist, in which our positions are so unequal.

But he is Chief Governor of Ireland, and to watch his conduct is my right as a free citizen, and my duty as an Irishman. I do so, not for his sake, but for my own ; not with officious zeal, but from motives of self-interest.

Holding such opinions, I wrote my pamphlets.

Commencing from the cardinal point—Mitchel's conviction,—conceiving that with that event the delusions which had been strengthening with the slow accumulations of years might be considered as dissi-

pated, and the moral atmosphere restored to its equilibrium once more,—I set myself from time to time in a familiar and unpretending way to point out a few of the more important though less observed features of passing events,—some of the most general current fallacies of the day; addressing myself separately to different classes, in the style I judged best suited to the capacities and necessities of each. I have never boasted that my object was a lofty one. I aimed at no more than this, to induce my countrymen to make the best of their actual condition, and relinquish the pursuit of those shadows for which they were year after year dropping the substance of prosperity. For myself, I always suspect the man who talks big about the sublimity of his notions and his complete disinterestedness. On the latter head, indeed, the guarantee of my sincerity I took care to place in the very circumstance that I *was* an interested party, having a *common* interest with my readers. I sought, in a word, to be humbly useful, on a small scale, and in a limited degree.

And now that I have said my say, I lay down my pen, never before employed on such a task. The urgency of a crisis in which my all was at stake drew me forth from a far more congenial retirement. To that retirement I gladly return with returning security; and pray God that I never again may see myself called upon to renounce it. Humble as my sphere of action has been, I have however the consolation of thinking that many good men have given



me credit for honesty, and so far corroborated the testimony of my own conscience.

But the year 1848 deserves more than this. Its events invite the pen of the HISTORIAN. Learning, Philosophy, Virtue, and Genius, have here a task worthy of them.

Let no zealous partisan, flippant journalist, starched theorist, dry book-worm, undertake it. *It* will master *him*, as surely as *he* is unequal to master *it*.

In that history, whenever it shall be finally and fully written, many names and many acts, now passed over by the public eye, will come forward for praise and for blame. This, I fear, is too true. But of those we are familiar with, one will assuredly stand out into increased prominence, and appear more conspicuous, the more the mists of the stormy present pass from about it. We may slight or undervalue or disregard the genius which influences political events, because its operations include ourselves in its grasp, and work too close at hand to be appreciably felt; but if ability is to be measured by the magnitude of a difficulty and the success with which it is surmounted, we cannot refuse to Lord Clarendon the tribute of our respect.

I know how ready people are to raise the *non est tanti* cry, and to tell us that he was bound to do all he did,—and only did what he was bound to do—his duty.

I admit it. But all good is our duty. Are we thence to deny a place within our breasts to gratitude?

We have been carried through an epidemic which has swept off the communities of Europe like a pestilence,—carried through without regimen or operation, by the sage counsels of an experienced physician.

I, for one, should be ashamed to deny him the *honorarium* of my thanks.

And far more warmly do I accord them to him than to the conqueror who points to my enemies stretched in thousands on the battle-field, and bids me participate in his triumph.

Lord Clarendon has, at all events, the favour of his Sovereign to solace him. He has returned to our shores, as I am informed, wearing the insignia of the most illustrious order of chivalry in the world, earned as nobly in peace as knight ever won his spurs in war. He may well compound for a little slander, a little obloquy, a little calumny, with the star of honour beaming upon his breast.

Such it is to be no more than an honest man, an efficient officer, and a loyal subject. I doubt whether to be the latter does not go far to make a man both the former.

I was brought up in the old school. I am not ashamed of my loyalty. The feeling may be out of fashion. They say it is,—that the *prestige* of kings is on the wane and will die out. I do not think so myself; and I have hinted why on a former occasion. But, whether or no, I dislike the style of thinking which raises the question at all. I hate the endeavour systematically to break down the ancient tenure by

*homage auncestrel*, existing without the formality of indentures between the sovereign and the subject. We shall be indeed a nation of shop-keepers when such ideas get head amongst us. You will find men now-a-days who think it very fine to talk of the sovereign as "the first paid servant of the State." What would they have me do? Transfer my allegiance from a person to an abstraction? from an illustrious line of princes to a steam-engine or a spinning-jenny? Such people would ask me to call a Nelson a hired bravo,—a Mansfield a stipendary magistrate,—a Pitt an articulated clerk. I hold that it is from the personal devotion of free men to the exalted representatives of power, dignity, and nobility, that a nation derives much of its elevation of tone and character. It is the want of this that has caused America, with all her resources, to miss of greatness in its most exalted sense. *She has nothing to look up to.*

People say, what is the use of STATE, with its cumbersome formalities and burdensome expenses? I reply, what is the use of the portico, the dome, the shrine, the tower, the temple? Why place the hero's statue on the top of the column, instead of on the earth beside us? Why raise the triumphal arch, when we might pass as easily through a wicket-gate? What is the use of sculpture, painting, music, poetry? What is the use of beauty?

If ever there was a case in which the character of an individual might uphold the assaulted majesty of



an office, and keep alive the flagging chivalry of a people, it is that of the sovereign of this mighty empire.

I have seen that illustrious personage in the artlessness of girlhood, receiving with the condescension of a native grace the homage of her future subjects, as she moved in her progress through the provinces of welcoming England. I have beheld her in the bloom and beauty of the bridal season, a queen, the object of every eye, the theme of every tongue. I have marked her, fresh from the murderous attempt of the assassin, passing amongst her subjects with the confiding firmness of true heroism, as one who trusted in them, in herself, and in her God. And I have since heard with emotion the constant story of the domestic virtues, of refined, innocent, and intellectual pursuits, of moral and religious propriety, shining, like a lamp from a lattice, forth from the sacred privacy of her home, for the guidance and encouragement of a great empire.

And when I heard that a wish had crossed the royal heart to visit her Irish dominions,—that broad and beautiful country in which my own feelings and interests lie alike enshrined,—my heart throbbed, I will own, with pride and impatience, to witness the mutual greeting of Ireland and its Queen,—the hundred thousand welcomes of the land of hospitality to the most illustrious guest that had ever approached its shores. And I hoped that much might have been achieved by the confiding act of condescension

on the one side and the enthusiasm of the occasion on the other, to knit the union between my Sovereign and my fellow-countrymen.

In these sanguine hopes I was doomed to disappointment. Other people may deem such matters trifles. I confess that it was with shame and confusion of face I perceived the cold response to the contemplated honour,—the half-suppressed intimation of possible inhospitality, operating (although I could trace them to their obscure and insignificant sources) in a way to touch the keenest sensibilities of my royal mistress, and discourage her in the exercise of her gracious intentions.

As I write, my cheek burns with indignation when I think of the brutality that could have meditated such a demonstration, even for a moment. Would that I could have flung my cloak, like Raleigh, on the discourteous mire that caused the royal foot to hesitate in stepping on the shores of my country ! But what is past is beyond recall. This was the fruit of AGITATION. From the first song of the *Nation* to the last whoop of the *Felon*, all was in the same key. The same spirit that animated the Ossianic eloquence which some of our sentimental drivellers think it becoming still to weep over, only developed itself still further in that crowning piece of barbarism.

Indeed, the whole struggle that has been going on here during this century may be considered as the friction of Progress upon Prejudice. It is the

savage principle, arrayed in its full romance, blindness, and ferocity, battling for its fastnesses against the legions of invading civilization.

It is defeated—and will be exterminated. I exonerate the peasant who was placed for the time in the fore-front of this strife, from much of the blame the world will heap upon him. He followed the lead, he knew not whither. He had left wretchedness and starvation in his cabin behind him,—around him he saw his countrymen in masses,—before him rose the shouts of ancient war-cries,—above him, he was told, smiled the “God of battles.” Is it in the nature of ignorance, credulity, and courage, to withstand such incitements?

Short as is the period that has since elapsed, things are changed. With reverse comes reflection. Disappointment sobers the judgment. An Irishman is no fool, though he is sometimes a madman; nor is he unchivalrous, though he is occasionally uncouth and ruffianly enough. Unless I am greatly mistaken, he is repentant at all events as regards his Queen. I think I see signs of it every day. Awkward and uncourtierlike though he may be,—for he is not used to courts,—I believe he would, at this hour, do homage with a not ungraceful humility at the foot of the throne.

It is not for me to constitute myself the ambassador of my countrymen before that throne. But that if indeed our gracious Queen were cordially and confidently to throw herself upon the honour and loyalty



of Irishmen, and come amongst us, her progress through the length and breadth of the land would be one long triumphal procession, I feel as confident as I do of my existence. Every feeling of my heart assures me of the rapturous welcome she would receive ; every conviction of my mind satisfies me that her presence would exalt loyalty from a principle into a passion in the breasts of Irishmen ; every trait in her Majesty's character tells me that she would understand, appreciate, and love us when she came to know us in our own land.

THE END.



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